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CRYSTAL PALACE.

JUDAS MACCABÆUS.

An Oratorio, Composed in 1746.

BY

GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL.

PERFORMED AT THE

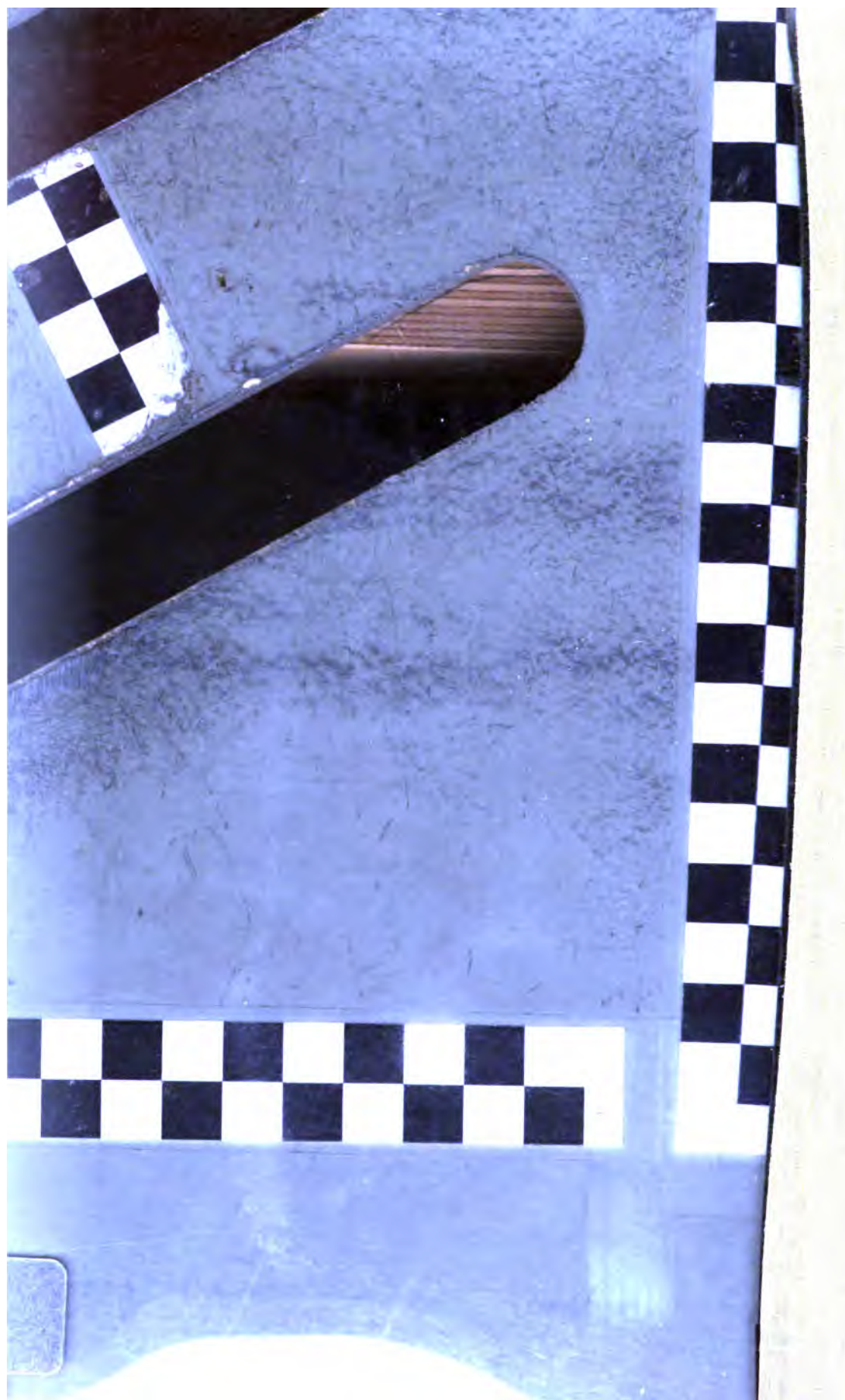
CRYSTAL PALACE

Saturday, June 25th, 1892.

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JUDAS MACCABÆUS.

An Oratorio, or Sacred Drama.

WRITTEN BY

THOMAS MORELL, D.D.

The Music Composed in the Year 1746,

BY

GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL.

WITH

ANALYTICAL REMARKS

BY

WILLIAM POLE, F.R.S.

Mus. Doc. Oxon.

Printed by J. Johnson, St. Paul's Church-yard.

LONDON : 1892.

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Saturday, June 25th,

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CRYSTAL PALACE.

HANDEL'S ORATORIO,

JUDAS MACCABÆUS.

Saturday, June 25th, 1892.

Part I.

URE

... .. Mourn, ye afflicted children
{ MADAME CLARA SAMUELL } From this dread scene
{ MR. MALDWYN HUMPHREYS }
... .. For Sion lamentation make
MR. SANTLEY Not vain is all this storm
MADAME ALBANI Pious orgies
... .. O Father, whose Almighty power
{ MR. SANTLEY { I feel the Deity within
Arm, arm, ye brave

Chorus We come, we come
Recit. } MR. EDWARD LLOYD... { 'Tis well, my friends
Air ... { Call forth thy powers
Recit. } MADAME ALBANI ... { To Heaven's Almighty King
Air ... { O Liberty
Chorus Lead on, lead on
Recit. MR. EDWARD LLOYD... .. So will'd my Father
Chorus Disdainful of danger
Recit. MR. MALDWYN HUMPHREYS Hastew, my brethren
Chorus Hear us, O Lord !

INTERVAL OF THIRTY MINUTES.

Part II.

... .. Fall'n is the foe
MADAME ALBANI Well may we hope
{ MADAME ALBANI { Sion now her head
{ MADAME CLARA SAMUELL shall raise
... .. Tune your harps
{ MADAME ALBANI { O let eternal honours
From mighty kings
{ MADAME CLARA SAMUELL... { Hail, Judea
{ MADAME PATEY
{ MR. EDWARD LLOYD { Thanks to my brethren
How vain is man
MADAME PATEY O Judas !

Chorus Ah ! wretched Israel
Recit. } MR. SANTLEY { Be comforted
Air ... { The Lord worketh wonders
Recit. } MR. EDWARD LLOYD ... { My arms !
Air ... { Sound an alarm
Chorus We hear
Recit. { MADAME PATEY { Ye worshippers of God
{ MADAME CLARA SAMUELL...
Air... MADAME CLARA SAMUELL... Wise men, flatt'ring
Duet { MADAME CLARA SAMUELL... { Oh ! never bow we
{ MADAME PATEY down
Chorus We never will bow down

Part III.

MADAME PATEY Father of Heaven
{ MADAME ALBANI { O grant it, Heaven
So shall the lute
MADAME PATEY... .. From Capharsalama
{ MADAME ALBANI { See, the conquering
{ MADAME CLARA SAMUELL... hero comes
MADAME PATEY... ..
CHORUS

March
Chorus Sing unto God
Recit. MR. SANTLEY Peace to my countrymen
Chorus To our great God
Duet { MADAME ALBANI { O lovely peace
{ MADAME PATEY
Air ... MR. SANTLEY Rejoice, O Judah
Chorus Hallelujah ! Amen

INTRODUCTION.

JUDAS MACCABÆUS is said to have been composed at the instance of Frederick, Prince of Wales, the father of George III., to celebrate the victory of his brother, William, Duke of Cumberland, over Charles Edward, the Pretender, at the battle of Culloden, on the 16th of April, 1746.

The libretto was written by Dr. Thomas Morell, a clergyman, secretary to the Society of Antiquaries, and author of several other works set to music by Handel. The first edition of the book of words has the following dedication :

“ To His Royal Highness Prince William, Duke of Cumberland, this faint portraiture of a truly wise, valiant, and virtuous commander, as to the possessor of the like noble qualities, is with most profound respect and veneration inscribed, by His Royal Highness's most obedient and most devoted servant,
“THE AUTHOR.”

The subject, which was suggested by Handel himself, is founded on the accounts given of the exploits of the great Jewish deliverer in the two books of the Maccabees, and in the twelfth book of Josephus's *Antiquities of the Jews*. The author has, however, in some respects slightly deviated from historical accuracy, in order the better to portray the character of his hero.

Out of the eighteen of Handel's sacred English compositions classed as Oratorios, the two most celebrated, namely, the *Messiah* and *Israel in Egypt*, are in what is called the “epic” form ; they consist simply of passages of Scripture, chosen for the purpose of illustrating a particular subject, but put together without any dramatic impersonation of character. This model, however, is an exceptional one.* All the others, *Judas Maccabæus* included, are “Sacred Dramas,” written in verse, with a regularly designed story, and a proper list of “*dramatis personæ*,” whose characters are individually sustained throughout the work.

A glance at the history of the Oratorio generally, which may not be out of place here, will show that this latter is really the original and normal form for compositions of the kind.

At a very remote period, it appears to have been the custom in Italy to perform representations of religious tales, or, as they were called, “Mysteries” or “Moralities” ; and in 1264, a society was founded at Rome for the purpose of acting or representing, in Passion Week, the sufferings of our Lord—a custom which long continued there. These Mysteries were introduced into Cis-Alpine Europe in the fourteenth century ; we have evidence that in 1378 the ecclesiastics and scholars of St. Paul's School exhibited similar representations in England, and at the time of the Reformation they were made such use of for polemical controversies, that an Act of Parliament was passed, in the 24th year of Henry the Eighth's reign, to prohibit the acting or singing of anything in them contrary to the established religion.

* The *Occasional Oratorio*, which is also in this form, is hardly entitled to the name, being rather a selection of sacred music than a regular Oratorio.

The manner of performance consisted chiefly of declamation, but incidental airs, choruses, and *laudi*, or hymns, formed an important feature in them; and sometimes there was playing on instruments between the parts. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, they began to take a more definite form. In 1558, San Felippo Neri founded a religious society which met in a certain "Oratorio" (the Italian word for an Oratory, or place of prayer) at Rome, and were hence called "La congregazione dell' Oratorio." It was customary at these meetings to represent Mysteries of the kind above described; and, in order to render them more interesting, San Felippo conceived the idea of getting some sacred story or event from Scripture written in verse, and set to music by one of the best musicians of the time. The excellence of these performances brought the Oratory into such repute, that the audiences increased daily, and in process of time the form of composition thus introduced became so identified with the society and the place, as to receive the name of "Oratorio," which, as an equivalent for "Sacred Drama," has been handed down to these days. It is scarcely necessary to say that the term is as inappropriate as it would be to call a play a theatre, or a mass a church; but such as it is, it has now become legitimised in every European language.

A work of this kind, composed as early as 1600, by Emilia del Cavaliere, and performed at Rome in the same year, has been preserved, and is remarkable as containing the first germ of what is now the chief distinguishing feature of the musical drama—namely, recitative. As music generally improved, the sacred compositions progressed also, both in number and merit. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, Oratorios became as numerous in Italy as operas, and Handel, who was there early in the eighteenth, doubtless at once perceived the capabilities of the new form of composition, and treasured it up for use at a future day. An opportunity of introducing it occurred soon after his arrival in England. In 1718, he entered the service of the Duke of Chandos as *Kapellmeister*, and two years afterwards composed his first Oratorio, *Esther*, which, however, for some reason or other, was laid by till 1732, when it was first performed publicly at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, in the presence of His Majesty George II. That year is therefore the date of a great event in our musical history: hitherto the English public had only known Oratorios by name; they now, for the first time, heard a composition of this nature, and they showed themselves immediately sensible of its excellences. It was the applause accorded to *Esther* that induced Handel to compose other Oratorios; and here therefore is the source of these magnificent works, which will bear his glory, and contribute to that of Great Britain, to the end of time.

The text of *Judas Maccabæus* is, as we have before observed, in the form of a "Sacred Drama"; but the literary ability displayed in its construction is, unfortunately, but of a poor order—very unworthy of the quality of the music. Plot, in a dramatic sense of the word, there is none: the book consists merely of a series of scenes, embodying by turns the expression of national lamentation, military ardour, rejoicing after victory, and religious zeal; the whole clumsily put together, embarrassed by unskilful repetitions, deficient in poetic feeling, and expressed in versification sometimes little better than doggrel. The poverty of the librettos Handel had to set was almost proverbial. Dr. Burney says of one of them, satirising the rest, "There is something in many of these lines that seems entitled to the name of poetry"; and Handel was complimented, in his own time, on his skill in dealing with such poor material. "His compositions," says one contemporary poet, "can inspire life into the most senseless words"; and another adds, "His music is sure to talk to the purpose whether the words do so or not." It is, however, indisputable that Handel was in reality very much influenced, not only by the general character of the subject he had to deal with, but also by the treatment of the scenes and the style of the diction. The simple mention of the *Messiah* and *Israel*, in which his subjects were drawn from the fountain-head of sublimity, and his words from the noblest phraseology in our language, would afford sufficient proof of this; but it is amply evidenced also in the present Oratorio. Where the scene lacks interest, or is unskilfully arranged, or where the diction is poor, the strength of the music flags; but whenever an important point, an elevated sentiment, or a good passage occurs, the great composer is himself again. A cursory examination will suffice to show that in nearly all the best pieces in a musical point of view, the character of the words is above the average of the whole.

Judas Maccabæus was the twelfth in order of Handel's English Oratorios, and at the time he wrote it he was 61 years of age. It was first produced at Covent Garden Theatre, on the 1st of April, 1747,* and was very successful. It ranked with the *Messiah* and *Samson* as the three most popular of his Oratorios, and was indeed performed oftener during his lifetime than any other of his works: *Judas* being produced 38 times; the *Messiah*, 34; and *Samson*, 30 times. On its thirteenth representation, the receipts amounted to £400. The political circumstances for which it was written favoured its reception, and the Jews supported it very strongly, as representing an interesting episode in their national history.

The Oratorio still preserves its popularity, but though there is much fine music in *Judas*, it is on the whole less interesting to the musician than several other Oratorios much inferior to it in general estimation. Saying nothing of the greatest of all, *Israel in Egypt*, there is more predominance of what may be called great writing in *Solomon*, *Samson*, *Saul*, *Deborah*, *Joshua*, and perhaps others, than in *Judas*; and yet many of these are comparatively unknown to the Oratorio-going public. The popularity of the present work is probably due to the remarkable breadth, simplicity, and clearness of its music. It was written avowedly for a popular occasion, and it is obvious, if we examine the style of the most favourite pieces, such as "Pious orgies," "O Father," "Arm, arm, ye brave," "Disdainful of danger," "Hail, Judea," "Sound an alarm," "See the conquering hero comes," "Sing unto God," etc., that they are characterised by a simplicity of construction and breadth of effect, which must have been purposely designed to render them easily appreciable to unlearned ears. The same characteristic of a broad, simple, telling style is observable also in the *Messiah*, and contributes, no doubt, essentially to its fame; but in that Oratorio it has resulted from a very different motive on the part of the composer. In writing the *Messiah*, I believe that Handel exercised no deliberate intention to make the music popular, but simply gave himself up to the inspiration of his genius, prompted by the sublimity of the theme, and unfettered by any attempts at elaborate or learned writing; and hence in "The Sacred Oratorio" the simplicity of the music is combined with a dignity and grandeur peculiar to itself alone.

There is not, however, wanting in *Judas*, food for the musician; it contains much that is admirable in art, as well as effective in style. Some of the choruses rank in every point of view among Handel's best compositions, particularly "Hear us, O Lord," "Fallen is the foe," "Sion now her head shall raise," and "We never will bow down." The latter, with its sublime profession of faith, is scarcely excelled by anything he has written. These and many other salient points of interest will be commented on in the proper place.

There has not been much scope in this Oratorio for dramatic definition of character, in which Handel has elsewhere so remarkably shown his power. The part of Judas is the only one which has any importance or individuality, and his character is well delineated in all the music allotted to him, as replete with manly energy and heroic enthusiasm. He sings tenor; all his pieces are good and effective, and some of them require a first-rate singer to render well. The other personages of the drama are quite subordinate, having no character at all; mere automata, in fact, set to deliver portions of the story in such voices as may be most convenient for the arrangement of the music. Simon, the brother of Judas, appears to bear something like a religious office, exhorting the people in priest-like bass; and there is a Jewish ambassador, Eupolemus, returning from Rome, who also sings the same part, but has only one recitative to deliver. The relief to the men's voices is given by an Israelitish woman and *man*, who *both* sing soprano; an arrangement as regards the latter unusual in our day, but common enough in the time of Handel, who, as is well known, has made King Solomon a treble, in the Oratorio of that name. The alto voice, which Handel was usually so fond of, is singularly neglected in the solo parts of *Judas*, there being only two recitatives for it, sung by Israelitish messengers, arriving incidentally with news from a distance.

The scoring of the Oratorio is simple and clear, corresponding well with the general style of the

* In this performance, Mr. Beard, the most celebrated tenor singer of Handel's day, took the part of Judas. Signora Galli, also, a favourite pupil of the composer's, laid the foundation on this occasion of her subsequent great fame as a mezzo-soprano singer. She came to England in 1743, but was little noticed till she sang in *Judas Maccabæus*. She retired from public life in 1770, but in 1797, being in distressed circumstances, she sang, though 74 years of age, at the Oratorio at Covent Garden.

music in other respects. There are only four vocal parts, except in one chorus, where the trebles are occasionally divided for the sake of particular contrapuntal effects. Handel's instrumentation comprises the usual string band, namely, two violins, viola, and bassi; with the addition of two oboes and two bassoons. In and after "Sound an alarm," but not before, two trumpets and drums are introduced; two horns and two flutes also appear in a few pieces. The side or military drum is played in the "March"; it is not in the score, but is known to have been so used in Handel's time, and probably by his direction.

The manuscript scores of this Oratorio that have authority are the following:

1. The original manuscript, in Handel's own writing, is fortunately preserved in the invaluable collection safely housed in the Royal Library at Buckingham Palace. Among the rich material yielded by these precious documents, not the least useful are the minute memoranda of dates which Handel in the latter part of his life was so careful to make. In the score of *Judas* the first page is headed: "Ouverture Oratorio Judas Maccabæus angefangen den 9 July 3 1746 oder den 8 3 dieses." Later on we find: "Fine dell' Atto primo G. F. H. July 21 3 1746; 22 3 völlig." Then: "Fine dell' Atto 2^{do} G. F. H. 2 Agost 2 1746 völlig." And lastly: "Fine dell' Oratorio G. F. H. Agost 11 3 1746 völlig geendiget."

Translating this odd mixture of three modern languages with the ancient astrological symbols we have: "This Overture to the Oratorio of Judas Maccabæus was begun either on Tuesday the 9th or Monday the 8th of July, 1746. The First Act was essentially ended by me Monday, the 21st, and fully completed Tuesday, the 22nd July. The Second Act was fully completed by me Saturday, the 2nd August; and the Oratorio was finished and fully completed by me, Monday, the 11th August, 1746."

2. The manuscript next in importance is the score which was used in conducting by Handel himself, and, after his death, by his pupil, amanuensis, and much-loved friend, John Christopher Smith. This score is very valuable and instructive as containing many notes and directions, either by Handel himself, or by Smith, who received them from him. It is also interesting as recording the names of the principal singers of Handel's day, to whom the solo parts were allotted. This score came into the possession of M. Victor Schœlcher, who was good enough to put it at the disposal of the author of these notes when they were originally written in 1857, and it is quoted here frequently under the name of "Schœlcher's Score." It is believed to be now in the possession of the Municipality of Hamburg.

3. There is also a manuscript score formerly belonging to the Sacred Harmonic Society, and now in the Library of the Royal College of Music at South Kensington. Its history is not known, but it is certainly a manuscript of very early date, and therefore of some authority.

The published full scores entitled to special mention are as follow:

1. Walsh's Edition of the *Airs and Duets* was published immediately after the first production of the Oratorio.

2. To this Randall subsequently added the *Recitatives and Choruses*, so making the work complete.

3. Arnold's Edition, probably based on these, was published about 1787, and formed for a very long period the foundation of all printed copies.

4. In 1855 appeared the score edited, for the English Handel Society, by G. A. (afterwards Sir George) Macfarren, who, in preparing it, made reference to the original autograph, and to the transcripts of the Sacred Harmonic Society.

5. In 1865 the German Handel Society published a full score with English and German words, edited by Professor Friedrich Chrysander, who appears to have consulted the original autograph, as also a "conducting score" (probably Schœlcher's), and the "earliest printed copy." This score is much more complete and accurate than any previous publication, and embodies most of the emendations obtainable from the comparison of the various manuscripts.

The two last-named editions contain valuable explanatory prefaces, to which, as well as to the two English biographies of Handel by Victor Schœlcher, 1857, and W. S. Rockstro, 1883, the author of these notes is indebted for much information. A great German Life of Handel has been undertaken by Professor Chrysander; the first volume appeared in 1858, the second in 1860; but the third (containing the great Oratorio period) is still incomplete.

Judas Maccabæus was performed as one of three Oratorios at the first Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace, on Wednesday, the 17th June, 1857. The performance was under the management of the Sacred Harmonic Society, and was conducted by the late Sir Michael Costa, who rearranged the instrumentation, and wrote additional parts for wind instruments, to fit it for the colossal scale on which it had to be done.

The present performance will be generally on the same plan, but with certain modifications introduced by Mr. August Manns.

The work will not be given perfectly entire, partly because of the long time it would take, but principally because the performance of the fifty solo pieces it contains would tax the principal singers beyond reasonable measure. The omissions consist of recitatives and a few of the least interesting airs, which may be found in all the usual editions.

The analytical remarks are revised from the copy issued in 1857. Their object is simply to direct the attention of such of the audience as have not had the opportunity of studying the music for themselves, to some of its most prominent merits; and, if they should in any degree tend to a more thorough appreciation of the genius and power of the great man to whom we owe the work, they will not have been written in vain.

W. POLF.

ATHENÆUM CLUB, S.W.

June, 1892.



JUDAS MACCABÆUS.

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED.

JUDAS MACCABÆUS.
SIMON, his Brother.
AN ISRAELITISH MESSENGER.

EUPOLEMUS, Jewish Ambassador to Rome.
AN ISRAELITISH MAN AND WOMAN.
CHORUS OF THE ISRAELITISH PEOPLE.

ARGUMENT.

PART I.—Lamentations for the death of Mattathias (the father of Judas Maccabæus and Simon), by whom the Jewish people had been roused to resist the cruelties and oppressions of Antiochus Epiphanes, the Syrian King, in his attempt to suppress their religion and liberties—The Divine favour invoked—Judas recognised as leader—Appeal to the patriotism of the people, and their response—The value of liberty—Preparation for war—Pious trust in God, and heroic resolve to conquer or die.

PART II.—Celebration of the victories gained over the armies of Apollonius, the Governor of Samaria, and Seron, the Deputy-Governor of Coelesyria; and the valour of Judas—Renewal of the war by a division of the Syrian army from Egypt, under Gorgias, and the despondency it occasions amongst the Israelites—Judas again rouses the failing courage of the people, and they set out to meet the enemy. Those who remain behind utter their detestation of the heathen idolatries by which the Sanctuary at Jerusalem had been desecrated, and their determination only to worship the God of Israel.

PART II.—Feast of the dedication at Jerusalem, after Judas and his followers had recovered and restored the Sanctuary, and re-established the liberties of the country—Return of Judas from his final victory over Nicanor and his confederates—Celebration of peace, and national thanksgiving.

Part the First.

OVERTURE.

SCENE. *Modin.*

ISRAELITES, *Men and Women, lamenting the death of MATTATHIAS, Father of JUDAS MACCABÆUS.*

CHORUS.

Mourn, ye afflicted children, the remains
Of captive Judah, mourn in solemn strains;
Your sanguine hopes of liberty give o'er,
Your hero, friend, and father is no more.

DUET.—*Israelitish Man and Woman.*

From this dread scene, these adverse powers,
 Ah ! whither shall we fly ?
 O Solyma, thy boasted towers
 In smoky ruins lie.

CHORUS.

For Sion lamentation make
 With words that weep, and tears that speak.

RECITATIVE.—*Simon.*

Not vain is all this storm of grief,
 To vent our sorrows gives relief.
 Wretched indeed ; but let not Judah's race
 Their ruin, with desponding arms, embrace.
 Distractful doubt and desperation,
 Ill become the chosen nation ;—
 Chosen by the great I AM,
 The Lord of Hosts, who, still the same,
 We trust will give attentive ear
 To the sincerity of prayer.

AIR.—*Israelitish Woman.*

Pious orgies, pious airs,
 Decent sorrow, decent prayers,
 Will to the Lord ascend, and move
 His pity, and regain His love.

CHORUS.

O Father, whose Almighty power,
 The heavens and earth and seas adore,
 The hearts of Judah, Thy delight,
 In one defensive band unite ;
 And grant a leader bold and brave,
 If not to conquer, born to save.

RECITATIVE.—*Simon.*

I feel the Deity within,
 Who, the bright Cherubin between,
 His radiant glory erst display'd :
 To Israel's distressful prayer
 He hath vouchsafed a gracious ear,
 And points out Maccabæus to their aid.
 Judas shall set the captive free,
 And lead us on to victory.

AIR.

Arm, arm, ye brave ; a noble cause,
 The cause of Heaven, your zeal demands !
 In defence of your nation, religion, and laws,
 The Almighty Jehovah will strengthen your hands.

CHORUS.

We come, we come, in bright array,
Judah, thy sceptre to obey.

RECITATIVE.—*Judas.*

'Tis well, my friends ; with transport I behold
The spirit of our fathers, fam'd of old
For their exploits in war.—Oh, may their fire
With active courage, you, their sons, inspire ;
As when the mighty Joshua fought,
And those amazing wonders wrought ;
Stood still, obedient to his voice, the sun,
Till kings he had destroyed, and kingdoms won.

AIR.

Call forth thy powers, my soul, and dare
The conflict of unequal war :
Great is the glory of the conquering sword
That triumphs in sweet liberty restor'd.

RECITATIVE.—*Israelitish Woman.*

To Heaven's Almighty King we kneel,
For blessings on this exemplary zeal.
Bless him, Jehovah, bless him, and once more
To Thy own Israel liberty restore.

AIR.

O Liberty, thou choicest treasure,
Seat of virtue, source of pleasure ;
Life without thee knows no blessing,
No endearment worth caressing.

CHORUS.

Lead on, lead on ! Judah disdains
The galling yoke of hostile chains.

RECITATIVE.—*Judas.*

So will'd my [zealous] father, now at rest
In the eternal mansions of the blest ;
"Can ye behold," said he, "the miseries
"In which the long insulted Judah lies ;—
"Can ye behold her dire distress,
"And not, at least, attempt redress ?"
Then faintly, with expiring breath,
"Resolve, my sons, on liberty or death."
We come, O see, thy sons prepare
The rough habiliments of war,
With hearts intrepid and revengeful hands,
To execute, O sire, thy dread commands !

SEMI-CHORUS.

Disdainful of danger, we'll rush on the foe,
That Thy power, O Jehovah, all nations may know.

RECITATIVE.—*Judas.*

Haste we, my brethren, haste we to the field,
Dependent on the Lord, our strength and shield.

CHORUS.

Hear us, O Lord ! O Lord, on Thee we call,
Resolved on conquest, or a glorious fall.

Part the Second.SCENE. *The same.*

The ISRAELITES celebrating the return of JUDAS from the victories over APOLLONIUS and SERON.

CHORUS.

Fall'n is the foe ; so fall Thy foes, O Lord,
Where warlike Judas wields his righteous sword.

RECITATIVE.—*Israelitish Woman.*

Well may we hope our freedom to receive,
Such sweet transporting joys thy actions give.

DUET AND CHORUS.

Sion now her head shall raise,
Tune your harps to songs of praise.

RECITATIVE.—*Israelitish Woman.*

O let eternal honours crown his name,
Judas, first worthy in the rolls of fame ;
Say, " He put on the breast-plate as a giant,
" And girt his warlike harness about him ;
" In his acts he was like a lion,
" And like a lion's whelp roaring for his prey."

AIR.

From mighty kings he took the spoil,
And with his acts made Judah smile.
Judah rejoiceth in his name,
And triumphs in her hero's fame.

DUET AND CHORUS.

Hail, Judea, happy land !
Salvation prospers in his hand.

RECITATIVE.—*Judas.*

Thanks to my brethren. But look up to Heaven :
 To Heaven let glory and all praise be given ;
 To Heaven give your applause,
 Nor add the second cause,
 As once your fathers did in Midian,
 Saying, The sword of God and Gideon.
 It was the Lord that for His Israel fought ;
 And this our wonderful salvation wrought.

AIR.

How vain is man, who boasts in fight
 The valour of gigantic might ;
 And dreams not that a hand unseen
 Directs and guides this weak machine.

Enter an ISRAELITISH MESSENGER.

RECITATIVE.—*Messenger.*

O Judas, O my brethren !
 New scenes of bloody war,
 In all their horrors rise ;
 Prepare, prepare,
 Or soon we fall a sacrifice
 To great Antiochus :—From the Egyptian coast
 (Where Ptolemy hath Memphis and Pelusium lost)
 He sends the valiant Gorgias, and commands
 His proud victorious bands
 To root out Israel's strength, and to erase
 Every memorial of the Sacred place.

CHORUS.

Ah ! wretched, wretched Israel ! fall'n how low,
 From joyous transport to desponding woe.

RECITATIVE.—*Simon.*

Be comforted ;—nor think these plagues are sent
 For your destruction, but for chastisement.
 Heav'n oft in mercy punisheth, that sin
 May feel its own demerits from within,
 And urge not utter ruin. Turn to God,
 And draw a blessing from His iron rod.

AIR.

The Lord worketh wonders
 His glory to raise,
 And still as He thunders,
 Is fearful in praise.

RECITATIVE.—*Judas.*

My arms !—Against this Gorgias will I go.
 The Idumean Governor shall know
 How vain, how ineffective his design,
 While rage his leader, and Jehovah mine.

AIR.

Sound an alarm !—Your silver trumpets sound !
 And call the brave, and only brave around.
 Who listeth, follow :—to the field again ;—
 Justice, with courage, is a thousand men.

CHORUS.

We hear, we hear, the pleasing dreadful call ;
 And follow thee to conquest. If to fall,
 For laws, religion, liberty, we fall.

[*Exit* JUDAS with the army.

RECITATIVE.

Israelitish Man.

Ye worshippers of God !
 Down, down with the polluted altars, down !
 Hurl Jupiter Olympus from his throne,
 Nor reverence Bacchus with his ivy crown
 And ivy-wreathed rod.
 Our fathers never knew him or his hated crew,
 Or knowing, scorn'd such idol vanities.

Israelitish Woman.

No more in Sion let the virgin throng,
 Wild with delusion, pay their nightly song
 To Ashtoreth, yclep'd the Queen of Heaven ;
 Hence to Phoenicia be the goddess driv'n ;
 Or be she, with her priests and pageants, hurl'd
 To the remotest corner of the world ;
 Ne'er to delude us more with pious lies.

AIR.

Wise men, flatt'ring, may deceive you
 With their vain mysterious art ;
 Magic charms can ne'er relieve you,
 Nor can heal the wounded heart.
 But true wisdom can relieve you,
 Godlike wisdom from above ;
 This alone can ne'er deceive you,
 This alone all pains remove.

DUET.—*Israelitish Man and Woman.*

O never, never bow we down
 To the rude stock, or sculptur'd stone :
 But ever worship Israel's God,
 Ever obedient to His awful nod.

CHORUS.

We never, never will bow down
 To the rude stock, or sculptur'd stone :
 WE WORSHIP GOD, AND GOD ALONE.

Part the Third.

SCENE I. *Mount Sion.*

ISRAELITISM PRIESTS, ETC., *having recovered the Sanctuary.*

AIR.—*Israelitish Man, or Priest.*

Father of Heaven, from Thy eternal throne,
Look with an eye of blessing down;
While we prepare, with holy rites,
To solemnize the Feast of Lights.

RECITATIVE.—*Israelitish Woman.*

O grant it, Heaven, that our long woes may cease,
And Judah's daughters taste the calm of peace;
Sons, brothers, husbands, to bewail no more,
Tortur'd at home, or havock'd in the war.

AIR.

So shall the lute and harp awake,
And sprightly voice sweet descant run,
Seraphic melody to make
In the pure strains of Jesse's Son.

SCENE II. *Near Jerusalem.*

RECITATIVE.—*Israelitish Messenger.*

From Capharsalama, on eagle wings I fly,
With tidings of impetuous joy:
Came Lysias, with his host, array'd
In coat of mail; their massy shields
Of gold and brass, flash'd lightning o'er the fields;
While the huge tow'r-back'd elephants display'd
A horrid front,—but Judas, undismay'd,
Met, fought, and vanquish'd all the rageful train.
Yet more, Nicanor lies with thousands slain;
The blasphemous Nicanor, who defied
The living God, and, in his wanton pride,
A public monument ordain'd
Of victories yet ungain'd.
But lo! the Conqueror comes, and on his spear
To dissipate all fear,
He bears the vaunter's head and hand
That threaten'd desolation to the land.

CHORUS OF YOUTHS AND MAIDENS.

See the conquering hero comes,
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums;
Sports prepare, the laurel bring,
Songs of triumph to him sing.

See the godlike youth advance,
 Breathe the flutes, and lead the dance ;
 Myrtle wreaths and roses twine,
 To deck the hero's brow divine.

FULL CHORUS.

See the conquering hero comes,
 Sound the trumpets, beat the drums ;
 Sports prepare the laurel bring,
 Songs of triumph to him sing.

A MARCH.

CHORUS.

Sing unto God and high affections raise,
 To crown this conquest with unmeasur'd praise.

SCENE III. *Jerusalem. A Public Place.*

ISRAELITES *meeting* EUPOLEMUS, *the Jewish Ambassador to Rome.*

Eupolemus.

Peace to my Countrymen.—Peace and liberty ;
 From the great senate of Imperial Rome,
 With a firm league of amity I come.
 Rome, whate'er nation dare insult us more,
 Will rouse, in our defence, her veteran power,
 And stretch her vengeful arm, o'er land and sea,
 To curb the proud and set the injured free.

CHORUS.

To our great God be all the honour given,
 That grateful hearts can send from earth to Heaven.

DUET.—*Israelitish Man and Woman.*

O lovely peace, with plenty crowned,
 Come spread thy blessings all around ;
 Let fleecy flocks the hills adorn,
 And valleys smile with wavy corn.

AIR.—*Simon.*

Rejoice, O Judah, and in songs divine,
 With Cherubin and Seraphin harmonious join.

CHORUS.

HALLELUJAH ! AMEN !

Rejoice, O Judah, and in songs divine,
 With Cherubin and Seraphin harmonious join.

ANALYTICAL REMARKS.

Part I.

OVERTURE.

THE Oratorio commences with an Overture, which is in the key of G minor, and in two movements the first a slow introduction, the second a fugue.

This overture appears to have no connection, in style, with the Oratorio itself; and, indeed, a reference to musical history renders it doubtful whether we are entitled to expect any such connection. The notion that a long musical performance, whether oratorio or opera, should be "opened" by an instrumental piece, is very old, and has been almost universally adopted. In some few cases, such, for example, as Handel's *Israel in Egypt*, the overture is omitted, and in some others, as in *Josua*, the introduction is made a part of the first scene; but such instances are rare, and form only exceptions to the general rule. The object which the overture was originally intended to serve consisted in little more than bringing the audience to a state of quiet, and calling on them to prepare their attention for what was to follow; and therefore but little care was bestowed on the composition beyond making it sufficiently striking to secure this end. About the middle of the seventeenth century, the French composer, Lulli, invented a definite form of overture, consisting of two movements; first a short Adagio, or Grave, of a solemn pompous character, and secondly an Allegro in the form of an instrumental fugue. Occasionally other features were added, as minuets, or similar pieces in the dance rhythms of the day, but the essential characteristics were the two movements above named. This form appeared to answer so well that it was adopted almost universally by the best writers of the period, including Handel, whose overtures, with few exceptions, correspond with the orthodox model.

It was almost an inevitable result of this stereotyped mode of proceeding, that the fugued overtures were independent of the piece they opened, having seldom any reference to its subject or incidents; they were, in fact, applicable indiscriminately to any sort of performance, whether oratorio, opera, or masque. The important idea of giving to the overture a symbolical character, analogous to that of the drama it was to "open"—an idea which has given such scope to the genius of modern composers—seems to have arisen much later than Handel's day.

The present overture may therefore be considered only as an independent instrumental piece, but it is by no means uninteresting. The fugue is energetic, and has a little resemblance, though probably unintentional, to the trio, "Disdainful of danger." It is first developed for some time by the stringed instruments only, after which the full orchestra and organ enter.

CHORUS—"MOURN, YE AFFLICTED CHILDREN."

The first scene of the drama presents the children of Israel mourning, in solemn strains, the death of Mattathias, who had roused them to resist the Syrian oppression, and whom they respectfully designate as their hero, friend, and father.

It must be remarked that in this Oratorio, owing to the unskilful construction of the libretto, we find no less than three choruses descriptive of very nearly the same sentiment, namely, lamentation over national misfortune. In the hands of an ordinary composer, this would have produced an inevitable monotony in the musical treatment; yet here, while the same general expression of lamentation is perfectly retained in all three, the style of each is quite distinct, and they bear little or no resemblance to each other—a trait which alone would identify them as the work of a great master.

The way in which Handel has accomplished this is very interesting. Notwithstanding the general similarity, he has contrived to discover, in each of the three sets of words, some distinguishing feature different from that of the others; and, by a marked expression of this feature, he has imparted to each chorus a perfect and distinct individuality of style. The three choruses alluded to are "Mourn, ye afflicted children," "For Sion lamentation make," and "Ah, wretched Israel": these all describe national sorrow; but in the first, Handel's practised eye has seen that the people are mourning the loss of a great man, and he has therefore made it a heroic elegy; in the second he has noticed the intensity and depth of their grief, and he has made the manifestation of this the key of the composition; in the third he has embodied the depression and despondency which is there the principal burden of the words.

The peculiar characteristic then of the present chorus is an expression of grief for the loss of an honoured individual. The solemn key, C minor; the slow, distinct, march-like step of the rhythm; the touching response of voice to voice repeating the mournful tale, "your friend, your father, your hero, is no more"; the long sustained notes on the word "mourn"; all distinguish this piece as a kind of dirge, or funeral celebration. We learn from the following recitative that the pale and breathless body is still within view of the people, and in this chorus they pay their last tribute to the virtues of the departed hero. For we may trace in the music a dignity of style which unmistakably indicates that the mourning is for a great man. The piece is not only a dirge, but a heroic one—akin to what Beethoven called a "*Marcia funebre sulla morte d'un eroe*"—and it embodies the expression as well of the affection and respect felt for the friend and father, as of the honour due to the hero.

There is a fine and striking progression in the middle of the chorus, where the chord of the dominant seventh has an unlooked for resolution by sharpening the fundamental note:

This progression appears to have been in favour with Handel at this time, as we find it used in several other places in the course of the Oratorio.

There is also another fine passage where, after a sudden and somewhat prolonged silence, the voices alone utter, *piano*, a cadence on the words "is no more"; the effect of which is touchingly mournful. The composer has repeated this feature at the end, in the original key, adding after it a renewed call to "mourn," and a short concluding phrase, both formed entirely on the chord of the tonic, without any further cadence. This device, which is quite original, gives great solemnity to the conclusion of the dirge.



DUET—"FROM THIS DREAD SCENE."

In this Duet, and a preceding recitative which is generally omitted, two sopranis, introduced as an "Israelitish man and woman," explain the subject of the general lamentation, and comment on the degraded state of the holy city. These two personages often reappear during the drama, their office being either narration of, or comment on, the various scenes or incidents embodied therein.

It is customary, in modern performance, to allot the second line of this duet to a tenor, and there is a tradition that this was done at an early period under the composer's sanction; but a reference to Handel's original manuscript shows clearly that in this piece, as throughout the whole Oratorio, the part of the Israelitish man was intended to be a treble; an arrangement common enough in Handel's day, though now obsolete. In M. Schœlcher's score, the names of several soprano singers are given, to whom this part was allotted.

In regard to many of Handel's solo pieces, much confusion has arisen as to what voices should sing them, this being generally a result of the unmusician-like practice of printing all voice parts, except the bass, in the G clef, a clef properly belonging to no voice at all, but to the violin. With music disarranged in this way, it is frequently impossible to tell what voices were intended; and, in many important cases, the correct tradition having become lost, erroneous practices have prevailed.

The duet is written in the form so often used by the older vocal writers, consisting of imitative two-part counterpoint, and calls for no special remark.

CHORUS—"FOR SION LAMENTATION MAKE."

In this Chorus the Israelites again give way to lamentation, the theme of their mourning now, however, being the state of their holy city, laid waste by Antiochus, the Syrian oppressor.

The prominent feature of the words of this chorus is, as already stated, the intensity of the manifestation of grief: the people lament, not with indifferent formality, but with heartfelt emotion—with sighs and tears; and it is this earnestness of feeling Handel has endeavoured to portray. The key, F minor, and the time, 12-8, appear peculiarly adapted to convey the expression of lamentation or weeping, and have been used by other writers for the same purpose. There are, however, here other very expressive features. The voices enounce the words of the last line in short separated phrases, "with words"—"that weep"—"and tears"—"that speak"; as if overcome with emotion, or interrupted by sobs and sighs; and at each phrase there generally occurs an unexpected and impressive change of harmony, with the view of giving the utmost possible earnestness to the sentiment conveyed. The first part of the chorus is accompanied by short notes of the string band, from which sustained wailing passages of the oboes and bassoons stand out in strong relief. This is not only highly in keeping with the general expression, but deserves to be noticed as an anticipation of orchestral effects much more modern. The peculiar halting motion of the bass throughout is doubtless intended to sustain the idea of strong emotion.

The harmonic progressions used in this chorus are in many places very striking and original. In the eighth and ninth bars, the composer repeats the chromatic resolution of the seventh already noticed. The following chromatic progression, at the seventeenth to the twentieth bars, deserves special mention:



Again, near the end, occurs a passage consisting of a transitory modulation into the major, which, though simple enough, and containing when viewed alone nothing remarkably new, enters in so unlooked for a way, and conveys such an irresistibly pathetic effect, that few auditors capable of appreciating fine harmony can hear it without interest:



The antique omission, from the voices, of the third in the final chord of this and other choruses in the minor key is noteworthy.

RECITATIVE—"NOT VAIN IS ALL THIS STORM OF GRIEF."

AIR—"PIOUS ORGIES, PIOUS AIRS."

The lamentations being concluded, we enter upon what may be called the second scene, the argument of which is an appeal to the Deity to grant a leader to His chosen nation. Simon, the brother of Judas, here makes his appearance, and exhorts the people not to give way to immoderate grief, but to trust in the Lord of Hosts, the great I AM, who, as they are afterwards reminded, will always graciously accept their prayers and sacrifices (for such we presume to be the meaning of the strange words, "pious orgies, pious airs"), if offered to Him in sincerity.

It seems to have been Handel's intention to insert here a Dead March for Mattathias, the commencement of which, nearly identical with that of the present song, is preserved in the original manuscript. The afterthought of the vocal adaptation was intended for Simon, being written in the key of E flat, for a bass voice. For some reason or other, however, the composer, as appears by a memorandum in pencil at the head of the air, subsequently thought fit to alter it for a soprano, transposing it a third higher, and making a corresponding change in the harmony of the latter part of the recitative.* Probably the song gains by the change, particularly in our day, when the cultivation of bass voices has less refinement than formerly. We are too much accustomed now to think a bass voice suitable only for such parts as Caspar, in *Der Freischütz*, or such songs as "Why do the nations?" or "Revenge, Timotheus cries"; but if we search the works of the older writers we shall find they frequently wrote bass airs of the most smooth and beautiful character, and replete with pathos and feeling—such, for example, as the present one; or, "Tears such as tender fathers shed," in *Deborah*; or, "Shall I in Mamre's fertile plain," in *Joshua*; or, "Vouchsafe, O Lord," in the *Dettingen Te Deum*. And there is no doubt that for the delivery of such songs a finely cultivated bass voice, under the command of an intelligent and musician-like singer, is exceedingly effective, perhaps more so than a soprano.

"Pious orgies" is an air so well known as to require little remark. It is written in a simple, unassuming style, characteristic throughout of the feeling of humility with which such prayers should be offered up. Its most curious feature is its frequent modulation; for, in the twenty-six bars of which the whole song consists, it modulates no less than thirteen times, passing through the keys, G, C, D, D minor, D major again, G, A minor, G, G minor, C, G, C again, and G to conclude. It is true these keys are all closely allied to the original one, and the passages from one to the other are made in the easiest and most flowing manner; but still so much modulation, in a composition of this kind, is unusual with Handel. The object, here was doubtless to gain sufficient variety without interfering with that simplicity of melody, which the sentiment of the piece rendered it necessary to preserve.

CHORUS—"O FATHER, WHOSE ALMIGHTY POWER."

The people respond to the exhortation of Simon with a chorus in the form of a prayer. It is divided into two movements, very dissimilar. The first, a *larghetto* in 3-4 time, is highly impressive. After a short melodial symphony, the voices enter alone with the first line of the prayer, in a manner strongly indicative of the humble filial adoration expressed in the words; but immediately afterwards, where the text refers to the ascription of praise to Jehovah by the heavens, the earth, and the seas, the style changes to one of more grandeur, the voices joining in fine simple chords, which the instruments accompany in a figure sufficiently marked to give that peculiar, forcible effect for which Handel was so famous, but still not so florid as to destroy the solemn dignity of the whole. The idea which the words also contain, of uniting Israel "in one defensive band," is well typified by the close simple harmonies of the voice parts, which are never once broken through the whole of the movement.

* By memoranda on M. Schœlcher's score, it appears that both recitative and air underwent several alterations at different times.

The first part of the chorus closes on the dominant harmony, and is followed by a lively, spirited *fugato*, occupying the two last lines of the verse. This has some strong expressions of the words "bold and brave," but it may, perhaps, be doubtful whether the boldness and bravery of the coming hero needed forcible illustration at that early stage. Handel, however, when he did get hold of emphatic words, could seldom resist the temptation to set them emphatically.

RECIT. (*Accompanied*)—"I FEEL THE DEITY WITHIN."

AIR—"ARM, ARM, YE BRAVE."

CHORUS—"WE COME, WE COME."

Here Simon, acting under the influence of prophetic inspiration, takes upon himself the office of interpreter of the Divine will; he declares that the Lord has heard the prayers of His people, and has appointed Judas Maccabæus to be their leader. He therefore calls on them to arm and support him, promising them that the Lord will strengthen their hands when fighting in defence of their laws and their religion.

There are only three recitatives in the Oratorio to which Handel has written an accompaniment for the orchestra; all the rest are left with merely a bass part, the harmony being filled up on the organ. The object of the special accompaniment is to give more importance and effect to the piece, as well as occasionally to introduce orchestral figures characteristic of the sense of the words. The present is one of the three recitatives alluded to, and Handel appears by the accompaniment to lay considerable stress on the first line, containing the announcement of the prophetic inspiration; the element which gives force and importance to the whole.

The energetic air, "Arm, arm, ye brave," is one of the most popular pieces in the Oratorio, sung by everybody who attempts to sing bass at all. The chorus, responding to the call to arms, is brilliant and effective; the slight imitative counterpoint on the words, "Judah, thy sceptre to obey," sets off by contrast the combined harmonies, full of determination, of the other parts.

It is worthy of notice that both in the song and the responsive chorus, though the accompaniments take clearly the form of the military *fanfare*, and are indeed real trumpet passages, in a true trumpet key, no military instruments whatever are, in Handel's original score, introduced in either composition, the passages falling principally to the oboes in the air, and the violins in the chorus. The omission is no oversight, but is prompted by an artistic design, as we shall have occasion to point out hereafter, in speaking of the song, "Sound an alarm." The taking of fanfare passages on the oboe, always a favourite instrument with Handel, was not done by him here for the first time; it occurs in a martial song, "Già grida la tromba," in the opera of *Roderigo*, produced at Florence as early as 1706.

RECIT.—"'TIS WELL, MY FRIENDS.'

AIR—"CALL FORTH THY POWERS."

Judas himself now appears on the scene, and, after congratulating the people on the continued presence among them of the heroic spirit of their forefathers, announces his own ardour and determination to brave the conflict of war.

This bravura tenor song is one of much difficulty, and gives great scope to the abilities of a singer of the first order. It is not only difficult on account of the passages, which are of the most florid character and most trying to the voice, but the style is energetic in the extreme, and defies interpretation by any but a consummate artist. The following passage, generally taken *ad libitum*, is admirably suited to display the voice and capabilities of a great singer:—



RECIT.—"TO HEAVEN'S ALMIGHTY KING."

AIR—"O LIBERTY."

A short recitative implores the Almighty to bless the zeal of the new commander, and through his instrumentality to restore freedom to Israel; this gives occasion for the two commenting soprani, the Israelitish man and woman, to indulge in a long scene in praise of the blessings of liberty.

First, we have the song mentioned above, for the woman; then a long air, also for her, to the words, "Come, ever smiling Liberty," etc.; thirdly, a recitative and song for the man, "'Tis liberty, dear liberty alone"; and, to conclude, a duet for the two together, formed on the second song.

One cannot help thinking that these four consecutive solo pieces, all on the same theme, are a little too much; and it is consequently proposed to perform only the first, which is the one printed in the programme. The second air, however, and the duet, are well worthy of attention, expressing the sentiment of the words with charming ease.

The popular air, "O Liberty," belonged originally to the *Occasional Oratorio*, produced by Handel in the beginning of 1746: it was not in the first manuscript of *Judas*, but was incorporated in the Oratorio by Handel himself at a subsequent date. In M. Schoelcher's copy it is written on a separate leaf, in Handel's own hand. It is a curious composition, being simply a duo for voice and violoncello, without other accompaniment of any kind. It is in common time, marked *largo*, but in reality it is performed pretty much *ad libitum*, something in the style of a recitative. The two parts meander about in company, like two lovers straying through a sunny glade, unfettered by considerations of time or space, and occupied only in the contemplation of each other. And it is possible that this perfect "liberty" of treatment was not altogether unconnected, in Handel's mind, with the illustration of the idea contained in the words.

CHORUS—"LEAD ON, LEAD ON."

The picture of the blessings of liberty, so attractively offered in the foregoing pieces, appears to prompt the people to a renewed expression, in the present short chorus, of their eagerness for the decisive contest which is to deliver them from the galling yoke of the oppressor.

The commencement is evidently intended to give the idea of a sudden and spontaneous burst of popular enthusiasm. After a simple chord from the orchestra, the bass voices, alone and unaccompanied, cry out, "Lead on, lead on;" the other parts at once take up the cry, in which all then join. After this, the basses, again without any accompaniment, give out the remainder of the words, "Judah disdains," etc., in which the other voices concur, as before. The musical setting of this latter sentence forms the theme on which the remainder of the chorus is constructed—relieved, however, by energetic repetitions from time to time of the call, "Lead on." The style of the whole is strongly marked, and very expressive of the impatient enthusiasm of the words.

RECIT. (*Accompanied*)—"SO WILL'D MY FATHER."

This is another of the recitatives to which Handel has written an accompaniment for the orchestra. It forms part of a short episode, in which the hero, prompted by the ready zeal of the people, recalls to them the scene of his father's latest hours. Mattathias, with his dying breath, had enjoined on his sons the task of aiding in the struggle for the freedom of their country; and Judas now, apostrophising his father's spirit, declares the readiness of himself and his brethren to execute his sire's command.

The recitative is highly dramatic. The change on the words, "then faintly, with expiring breath," though a very simple harmonic progression, has a peculiarly plaintive effect. At the words, "We come," a vivid accompaniment enters of the whole string band, through which the voice pierces in its energetic enunciation of the heroic resolve to prepare for the warfare.

SEMI-CHORUS—"DISDAINFUL OF DANGER."

There is difference of opinion whether this piece should be performed as a trio, a semi-chorus, or a full chorus; the description varying in different copies of the Oratorio.

The latter plan has the warrant of general custom, and will therefore be adhered to on the present occasion; but it admits of discussion whether it is in strict accordance with the intentions of the composer.

An examination of the text will show that in the recitative immediately preceding, Judas represents his departed father as having addressed himself and his brethren in the words,

to which he at once responds: "Resolve, *my sons*, on liberty or death;"

"We come, O *see, thy sons* prepare
The rough habiliments of war,
With hearts intrepid and revengeful hands,
To execute, O sire, thy dread commands."

Now, when we find the above passage followed immediately, without break of harmony, by the words,

"Disdainful of danger *we'll* rush on the foe,"

we can scarcely avoid the conclusion that the speakers here must be the *sons* of Mattathias, concurring in the response which Judas had given in their name just before. And in the musical structure of the composition, there is evidence that Handel understood the text in this way. The piece has three vocal parts, for male voices only—alto, tenor, and bass—and it is designated, in the earliest manuscripts we can find, as a "Semi-Chorus"—a term generally understood to imply that a small number of voices only, of each part, are to sing. By a reference to the second chapter of the first book of the Maccabees, we learn that Mattathias had five sons—Joannan, Simon, Judas, Eleazar, and Jonathan; and nothing can be more natural than to infer that the composer, in writing three male parts, with a small number of voices to each part, intended to represent these sons as the singers. The only other way in which he could have expressed such an intention would have been by making the piece a quintett; but this was a form of composition almost unknown in Handel's day, and one which would have been difficult to deal with in performance, particularly for male voices only. If the composer had intended the piece to be a full chorus of the people in general, we can conceive no reason why he should have omitted the soprano part, which exists in all other choruses throughout the Oratorio, and the want of which here renders the piece, as a chorus, ineffective, and makes it contrast unfavourably with the rest.

M. Schœlcher's manuscript score contains, in pencil, the names of certain principal singers attached to each part; a sufficient proof that, either in Handel's time, or at any rate immediately afterwards, the parts were taken by solo voices. The same authority shows the accompaniments marked *piano*, when the voices come in, which, in a piece of this style, would scarcely have been done if each part were to be taken by the whole mass of voices.

The composition is deservedly a favourite one, for, independently of its effective and popular character, it possesses many fine musician-like features. We may instance the bold expression of the first phrase, with its singular ending on the sixth: the slight amplification in the accompaniment, rendering it still bolder; the skilful rendering of the impatience to "rush on the foe," not only by the vocal setting, but also by the restless octave accompaniments cutting through the harmony; and the beautiful, placid episode—beautiful alike in melody, harmony, and rhythm, picturing the result of the warfare—the spread of the knowledge of the Lord, "That Thy power, O Jehovah, all nations may know." Probably the author of the words here intended only to refer to the manifestation of power in a warlike sense; but I think the setting shows that Handel has given the passage a more extended interpretation.



Dis - dain - ful of dan - ger.

RECIT.—“HASTE WE, MY BRETHREN.”


CHORUS—“HEAR US, O LORD.”

The time being now come for action, Judas summons his followers to the field ; but before their departure they implore the blessing of the Almighty on their arms, announcing their resolution to conquer or die. This prayer furnishes the subject for the chorus, which concludes the first part—an exceedingly fine composition, exhibiting in a high degree that power of construction and truth of expression, that art and genius, in the combination of which, for choral purposes, Handel had no equal.

The setting of the first line,

“Hear us, O Lord ! O Lord, on Thee we call !”

is a masterly specimen of the ancient imitative contrapuntal style, always grand in its effects when treated by the hand of a master ; but into which Handel, with the genius peculiar to him has infused a melody and expression perfectly modern. The frequent long sustained notes, and the continual breaking in of the words “hear us,” as well as the general earnest character of the whole, present forcibly to the mind the idea of that entreating, wrestling supplication which the words imply. “I will not let thee go, except thou bless me,” said the great ancestor of the Jewish people ; and we may imagine his descendants here actuated by a similar spirit in imploring a benediction on their arms.*

At the twenty-fourth bar the chorus takes a different character, more in accordance with the heroic resolution contained in the latter part of the words. The counterpoint and general construction become more animated, and a figure in semiquavers:  incessantly repeated, either by voices or instruments, or both, gives a remarkable vigour to the effect.

The composition of the whole chorus, which is of considerable length, shows great skill, and well repays careful study. Notwithstanding the florid nature of the counterpoint, the harmonies on which it is built are very pure and dignified, containing rich sequences of frequent occurrence, but skilfully varied in form, and presenting some fine, antique, Palestrina-like progressions.

The florid semiquaver passages above quoted are generally accompanied by a short counter, figure of three quavers, and also by a series of syncopated sustained notes, which serve to bind the harmony together, when it would be otherwise too straggling. These latter, as well as the general florid counterpoint and the fine style of sequence, are well illustrated in the following passage :



The words of the supplication, with their characteristic setting, come in again towards the middle of the chorus, and at the end is a short coda, repeating the whole verse in a connected form. The E flat in the bass, at the commencement of the second bar of this coda :



is singularly emphatic—“On Thee, O Lord.” It is the same idea as at the commencement of the chorus, “We hear,” and used with the same object. It is worthy of remark that the general purity of Handel’s tonality—his careful avoidance not only of unnecessary and aimless change of key, but even of the temporary introduction of notes foreign to the scale (a practice so common nowadays, even with writers of reputation)—give to the resources of modulation, when he chooses to use them, a

* The Germans have a word, “*flehen*,” which expresses admirably this earnestness of prayer, but it has no equivalent in our language.

vastly increased power. A sudden change, or accidental note, will often produce a grand effect by contrast among his simple harmonies, while in the works of those who fling about flats and sharps at every step the same things would fall tame and unobserved. I believe this is the true secret of the weakness in sacred music of a writer strong in every other branch of his art—namely, Spohr. When in the midst of continual modulation and an incessant series of accidentals, he wishes to be forcible, the best means of giving force is no longer at his command.

Part II.

CHORUS—"FALL'N IS THE FOE."

The interval between the first and second parts is supposed to be occupied in the battles fought with Apollonius, the governor of Samaria, and Seron, the deputy-governor of Coëlesyria, in which the Israelites, under their new leader, obtained triumphant victories. The first scene of the second part is devoted to the celebration of these victories, and to the praise of Judas, whose intrepidity had been conspicuous during the campaign. It comprises three choruses and several recitatives and solo pieces, among which are some of the gems of the Oratorio. The two first choruses especially are among the finest Handel ever wrote.

The one before us is distinguished by its highly dramatic character. Its design is, as it appears to me, not to portray the fight, for it has no resemblance to battle-music; nor yet to celebrate the triumph, for it is not at all a jubilant composition; but rather to convey the idea of the *routing* of the enemy. The discomfiture of the foes of the Lord is an object over which His victorious people may well exult; and though, as we shall see, they are not altogether insensible to the woes of the vanquished, the chief sentiment is an energetic enunciation of the great fact that the enemy have succumbed. There is no mistake about their humiliation; they fly in terror and dismay; they are utterly fallen; and their fall is a warning to all the oppressors of God's people—"So fall Thy foes, O Lord."

The chorus opens with an anticipatory symphony, in which some of the leading ideas are embodied; after which the bass and tenor voices announce in unison the expressing leading phrase:



The sudden silence at the end of this short passage, coming after the florid symphony, is very striking, and rivets the attention strongly to the dramatic announcement, which is immediately repeated in like manner. The phrase is then taken up by the other voices singly, and subsequently, with great effect, by the whole together; the orchestra meanwhile keeping up an energetic accompaniment in semiquavers. The movement of this accompaniment, which has already been anticipated in the symphony, runs through the whole chorus, and forms one of the chief elements of its peculiarly dramatic character. It is impossible by analysing the passages to say why they produce this effect, so subtle are the inspirations of genius, and so different from the elaborations of art; but the fact is undeniable. At the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh bars the principal phrase is taken in full chorus twice over—first in D, and then immediately afterwards in C, one note lower, without any intervening harmony. This is a striking effect, the object being again to arrest the attention on the force of the words. A similar device forms a prominent feature in the first movement of Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony.

After a cadence in the dominant key, a new subject is introduced in A minor, on the words, "Where warlike Judas wields his righteous sword": it is first taken by the trebles, and then worked in counterpoint by the other voices, in the style of a fugue, the answers, however, being all in the same key. This second subject, though quite different in form from the first one, is perfectly consistent with it in style and expression, as a proof of which they are shortly afterwards combined, some of the voices reverting to the first phrase, while the others continue the second.

The elaboration of this double subject forms the basis of the remainder of the piece ; but it is interrupted by a passage in which the singers appear suddenly to remember that the discomfiture of the enemy, though a subject of exultation to themselves, is yet one of sadness to the fallen. This pathetic element in the picture is expressed by taking the word "fallen" *piano*, and, with a subdued accompaniment, repeating it, after three beats of silence, with a change of harmony. After this, the original phrase interposes, once, *forte*, but is again immediately followed by the *piano* passages more marked than before ; and here the composer has used, for the third time in the Oratorio, the striking progression of which an example is given in the first chorus. It appears as if, in writing *Judas Maccabæus*, that progression of all others presented itself to his mind wherever he wished to produce an impressive effect of a plaintive character.

Towards the end of the chorus, the voices are gathered up together in massive chords, with the semiquaver accompaniment lashing in octaves through the whole string band ; a combination of immense energy and striking dramatic effect, which is heightened by the repetition immediately afterwards of the plaintive episode. The whole passage is worth extraction :

VOICES. *f* Where war-like Ju - - das, war-like Ju - - das wields, wields,

ACCOMP. *f*

wields his right - eous sword. *p* Fall'n,

fall'n, fall'n is the foe ; *f* so fall thy foes, O Lord.

After this, a few bars formed from the two subjects, bring to a conclusion this remarkable chorus—one of the greatest works of this great man.

RECIT.—“WELL MAY WE HOPE.”

DUET AND CHORUS—“SION NOW HER HEAD SHALL RAISE.”

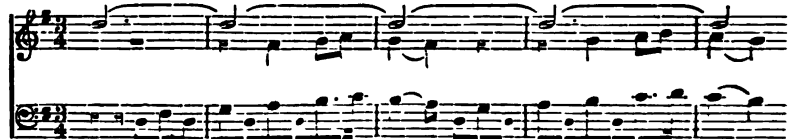
After the chorus, “Fall’n is the foe,” come a recitative, “Victorious hero,” and a song, “So rapid thy course is,” intended specially to exalt the personal prowess of Judas. These are usually omitted, and we pass on, after a short recitative, to the duet and chorus above named, the subject of which is a rejoicing for the restoration of the holy city, and her exaltation from the abasement under which she had so long lain ; a result of the victory which the pious Israelites deeply appreciate.

This piece is not in the original manuscript of the Oratorio, nor in the first edition of the book of words, but it appears in the following edition, and was probably introduced about 1758. Dr. Burney, writing in 1785, states he was assured that it was dictated by Handel to John Christopher Smith, his most intimate friend and assistant, after the total loss of his sight, which took place in 1752 ; and as we know of no work bearing a later date, it is quite possible that this chorus may be his last, or one of his last compositions. If so, it is a worthy song of the swan, for though not what may be called a popular chorus, it exemplifies in a high degree many of the leading characteristics of the great composer’s genius and skill. It is written in a fine, noble style ; the harmonies are simple and dignified, and it contains contrapuntal features of singular merit. It is peculiarly melodical in its structure, and there is a flowing singing character about it that gives it a great charm. It is like Bach, Palestrina, and Mozart combined ; and it would seem as if the old blind man, in this chorus, had a special intention to leave to the world, as Mozart did, a last example of his power in musical composition.

The duet is for two soprano voices, and anticipates the principal themes used in the chorus following. The chorus itself, though written in five staves, is generally only for the four usual voices, the trebles dividing into first and second in places where the composer wished to gain an additional part—a device he has often used elsewhere.

There is a fine effect at the point where the duet leads into the chorus. The key of the composition is G, but the duet ends in the key of C, well determined by modulation many bars before : one of the voices then holds the new key-note, C, alone, but the chorus interpret it as belonging to the dominant seventh of the original key, and at once burst out upon this harmony ; the solo voice, taking the hint, resolves the C upon B, which the *tutti* trebles then take up, and the chorus proceeds in the original key. This is one of the composer’s numberless great effects, produced by means so simple as almost to elude description.

A feature very prominent throughout the chorus is the retention of one note for several bars together. Sometimes the note is held by one part only, accompanied by an elegant melodical phrase, very often occurring, thus :



but the idea is developed further in other places by the note being taken up and held by several parts in succession. An instance will be found at the commencement of the next illustration. This passage generally occurs on the word “tune,” and is an instance of a kind of descriptive illustration frequently adopted by Handel, on which we shall make a few further remarks by-and-by.

Another fine idea is the frequent use of passages ascending diatonically, in well-marked progression, and generally terminating by a holding note at the top of the ascent. This again is a descriptive feature, derived from the leading sentiment in the text—“Sion now her head shall raise.” The holy place has been long humbled under her oppressors, but she shall now raise herself, in a prominent manner, out of the dust, and, as the composer has poetically implied in the holding note, hers is to be no mere temporary exaltation ; she shall remain in her high position, that the nations around may behold her glory.

This descriptive feature derives increased force from the occasional inversion of the tenor and bass parts, by setting the bass to sing the tenor notes in the upper portion of its register. The inner

arts are often made to cross by good contrapuntal writers, with the object of improving the melodies, or otherwise of accommodating contrapuntal necessities ; but in the extreme voices this is unusual—Handel particularly so, as his counterpoint is always so simple and clear. In this chorus, however, the design of the contrivance evidently is to bring out the tenor notes with greater force, and thereby to give them more emphasis and importance. Every one knows that the upper part of the register of a bass instrument gives a more powerful tone than can be obtained from the same notes taken on a tenor one; and hence the every-day employment of the violoncello as a tenor instrument. The same rule applies also to voices, but it is less often called into exercise. Handel has used it here with marvellous effect, as may be seen in bars 9 to 18, 73 to 77, 136 to 142. In all these cases, it will be observed, the bass voice mounts gradually up to a high note, which it then retains for some time, while the tenor descends considerably below it, taking the true bass of the composition. There can be no doubt of the intention of the composer to give, by this means, particular force to the high note, and so to effect more strongly the expression of the idea in the text above alluded to.

Handel's descriptive music has, I think, sometimes been criticised from too limited a point of view. That his power in this department of his art was very great, no one can deny who knows his works at all ; but he is sometimes accused of having descended to a species of description considered unworthy of him, namely—the special illustration, by musical means, of particular ideas, or particular words in his text. It appears to be thought that the only legitimate and worthy kind of descriptive music is that which aims at its object only by a general pervading character of style, and that what is denominated *word-painting*, or minute illustration of particular ideas, is a device to be eschewed by a great composer.

No doubt the former category is by far the most noble and difficult—so difficult, indeed, as to be unapproachable by any but the most gifted writers ; but it is hard to see on what principle we are authorised to condemn the lesser exercise of the descriptive power, when applied in a judicious and musician-like way. It may, it is true, in unskilful hands, degenerate into triviality, or the mere parrot-mocking of natural sounds, which, unless redeemed by some special technical merit, is the lowest grade of description ; but this can scarcely occur with a composer who is master of his art—such a one, though he may write imitative music, will still make it good music, and good music is admirable in any form. So far as authority goes, we have the example of all great composers in favour of the kind of description alluded to, for there is scarcely an eminent writer in any age, since music became an art, who has disdained to illustrate, musically, special ideas occurring in his text or his programme, when he conceived by doing so he could render his composition more interesting or more expressive.

The two descriptive features in the present Chorus, above alluded to, are examples of the kind of minute illustration to which objection is usually made. The passage where several parts, one after the other, take up and retain the same note, is not unnaturally associated with the word “tune,” on which it most frequently occurs. Now it may be said, this passage is imitative of the process of “tuning” in an orchestra, and is therefore a trivial and puerile device, unworthy of serious music, and beneath the dignity of the composer. But though this charge may appear plausible at first sight, it will not bear examination. The composer had to set to music an address to the people, couched in the words, “Tune your harps to songs of praise” ; and of course in writing the music he would consider what these words mean. One way of explaining them would be to take them simply in a general sense, as a circumlocution for “praise the Lord”—a sentiment of such continual recurrence in sacred music, as scarcely to admit of any special characteristic rendering ; but Handel, who never lost an opportunity for an original thought, saw more in the words than their common-place interpretation—the expression evidently admits of being understood as an exhortation not merely to praise, but to praise with a unity of voice and heart. The idea is, “Let your praise be united ; sing not in isolated or discordant strains, but together and in harmony—*tune* your harps ; so that though your songs be ten thousand, they may ascend to the Lord as one.” Presuming, therefore, Handel to have seized on this idea,—obviously borne out by the words—was it not legitimate and worthy of him to illustrate it

in his music? and if so, how could he have done it more to the purpose than he has done? He could not have represented it by mere harmony, which must have been present in any case; nor by unison, which would have conveyed no special idea of the kind: but by the ingenious contrivance in question—by cementing, as it were, the various parts one on to another, and thus combining them in one single note, while each still retained its own individuality and freedom—it appears to me he has succeeded in expressing the unity of action implied in the words, in a manner no less appropriate than beautiful. The tuning of an orchestra has surely nothing to do with the matter, when viewed in its proper light; for the idea and its expression would remain the same if such an operation had never been known.

The other descriptive point in the chorus is the use of an ascending passage to illustrate the words, "Sion now her head shall raise." It might be said that this also is an unworthy expedient, inasmuch as the idea of high and low, ascending and descending, on the musical gamut, is one for the eye only, and therefore ought not to be considered a legitimate means of expression in musical sounds. But is not this assuming too much? Is it not a fact beyond dispute, irrespective altogether of any speculation as to its cause, that a progression of musical intervals from bass towards treble does actually convey to the mind, through the ear, this idea of elevation? And if so, is there anything otherwise than legitimate in a composer making use of such a progression for its illustration? We know of no other mode by which such an idea could be conveyed in music, and therefore to say Handel ought not to have used it, is equivalent to saying he had no business to illustrate the words at all, which would certainly be going too far. If it be urged that the contrivance is obvious, common-place, trivial, we reply, that its character depends on the manner in which it is applied. It is no new principle in any branch of art that a common idea will take a noble character in the hands of a great artist, and it is certainly not in the chorus now before us that Handel can be convicted of using a style unworthy of his dignity. The plagal cadence is a common-place idea—its repetition fifty times in one movement might be called trivial in the extreme—yet the plagal cadence, fifty times repeated in its simplest shape, forms the essence of the Hallelujah Chorus in the *Messiah*!

There is a passage near the end of the chorus which is of singular grandeur, and which, as it contains several of the remarkable features we have endeavoured to describe, deserves special illustration:

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system shows the vocal parts: Soprano (1 and 2), Alto and Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics "Si - on now her head, now her" are written below the Bass staff. The second system continues the vocal parts with the lyrics "Si - on now her head, now her head shall raise; . . . Tune your harps." The third system shows the instrumental parts, likely for harps, with the lyrics "head shall raise; . . . Tune your harps." The score is written in G major (one sharp) and common time.

The commencement contains the descriptive contrivance of one note sustained by different parts one after another. The key-note, G, is held first by the alto, then taken up in succession by the tenor and the second soprano, and lastly by the first soprano. This part then descends to D, which the two soprani hold together, while the bass commences a long march upwards of an octave and a half, from low B to the upper E, about the highest note on the vocal bass scale, which is held for six bars. Meanwhile, the tenor, adopting the real bass part, descends to F sharp, and the trebles take up the ascending diatonic passage, joined subsequently by the alto, till both voices arrive also at *their* highest notes—namely, A for the soprano, and C for the alto—which, combined with the F sharp and E in the lower parts, form a grand emphatic climax on the chord, or rather discord, as it is the custom to call it, F sharp, E, C, A. This is sustained two bars; and we have in it three of the parts holding simultaneously, and for a considerable time, notes completely at the top of their register, the most emphatic note of the whole, the discordant E, being given to the bass, though really belonging to the tenor. The gradual preparation of the climax by the ascent of the upper and the descent of the lower parts—the E in the middle serving, as it were, for a point of departure—gives it additional grandeur.

This sublime effect, be it observed, arises solely out of pure counterpoint. There is no modulation, no note foreign to the scale, no extraordinary harmony (for the emphatic chord itself is, in a harmonic point of view, very simple, and in every-day use), no novelty of melody or rhythm, no interest of accompaniment, the orchestral parts merely doubling the vocal; the whole is due to the distribution, by the hand of genius, of four voice parts, the management of which would appear so simple! The consideration of this passage, which is but the extension and amplification of ideas contained throughout the chorus, and of the style of which the whole more or less partakes, is sufficient of itself to justify the estimation in which this composition is held by all who can appreciate the higher merits of vocal writing.

RECIT.—“O LET ETERNAL HONOURS CROWN HIS NAME.”

AIR—“FROM MIGHTY KINGS.”

This well-known soprano song is supposed to be sung by the Israelitish woman in praise of Judas, and forms one of the favourite pieces in the Oratorio. The cause of its popularity I conceive to lie, not so much in its melody or expression, as in its most original and fascinating rhythm, in which particular it would be difficult to find any composition of Handel's more striking. It was not often that he departed from a tolerably strict prosodial arrangement of his words; but when he did so, it was not in vain. The rhythmical structure here is so peculiar, and so unlike what the measure of the poetry would suggest, as almost to lead to a suspicion that the air may have been composed before the words; but however this may be, it is not the less admirable. It is singular what a variety of phrases the 12-8 movement may assume. In the chorus, “For Sion lamentation make,” as in Mozart's “Lacrymosa,” from the *Requiem*, it has a deeply pathetic character; in the Pastoral Symphony, from the *Messiah*, as in the “Sinfonia Pastorale” of Beethoven, it is smoothly flowing; in the present piece it is a light tripping measure, carrying both singer and hearer along with a gaiety quite irresistible.

The melody of the song, considered independently of the rhythm, is perhaps less beautiful than in many airs less celebrated; but it has the merit of being, in many points, highly original. Who else, for instance, than such a genius as Handel, would have dared to begin a song with an unaccompanied passage like the following, in which key, time, form, and harmony are all alike left so mysteriously indefinite to the ear?—
or who, but such a great composer, could transform into beauty this awkward phrase

which occurs near the end?

The expression, in the main body of the song, is aimed at the second line, “And with his acts made Judah smile,” rather than at the spoiling of the kings, as the style is not at all approaching the

heroic. The exact import of the words is not very clear, but Handel evidently interprets them to refer to the happiness the nation will enjoy under the peace which Judas has obtained for them; and it is probable he may have had in his mind also some pastoral allusion, as in the duet near the end of the Oratorio, where the blessings of peace are directly connected with the prosperity of the agricultural pursuits of the people. It is worthy of remark, that on the word "smile," occurring in both pieces, the composer has used a similar device—namely, dotted notes and a shake; but the faster time and more sprightly rhythm in the present one, give to the smile an expression of gaiety differing essentially from its placid character in the later piece. These shakes, as well as the general elegant and fantastic character of the movement, afford ample means of display for a singer who has a delicate and flexible voice well under command.

The latter part of the recitative, where the usual clumsy poetry gives way for once to the fine literal words of Scripture, is highly dramatic, as is also the second part of the song, which is entirely distinct from the principal movement, and is well suited to the triumphal character of the words.

DUET AND CHORUS—"HAIL, JUDEA."

This duet for two soprani, followed by a chorus on the same theme, closes the celebration of Judas's first victories. The arrangement of the voices in the duet is pleasing and effective, and the chorus is particularly simple and clear. The figure in the fourth bar of the Chorus is a favourite one of the composer, being found almost note for note in several other of his compositions.

RECIT.—"THANKS TO MY BRETHREN."

AIR—"HOW VAIN IS MAN."

Judas here thanks his compatriots for the enthusiasm they have shown towards him in the preceding pieces, but bids them ascribe the glory only to the Lord, reminding them that an unseen Providence overrules and directs all human affairs.

In the recitative, the words, "The sword of God and Gideon," are set with much emphasis. The air, though containing passages which seem somewhat antiquated to modern ears, is of a fine bold character. The second part,

"And dreams not that a hand unseen
Directs and guides this weak machine,"

has a mysterious expression, highly in keeping with the words.

RECIT.—"O JUDAS, O MY BRETHREN."

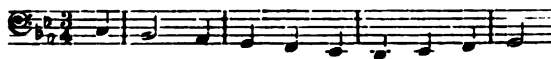
CHORUS.—"AH, WRETCHED ISRAEL."

The scene now again darkens. An Israelitish messenger enters in haste, informing Judas and his countrymen of the impending attack of the Syrian army, under Gorgias, whom the king had commissioned to destroy the strength of Israel, and root out their memorial from Jerusalem.

This announcement gives rise to another lamentation chorus—the third of the kind in the Oratorio. We have already noticed, in the first scene, how skilfully the composer has contrived to draw a distinction between the three pieces, by seizing on some particular sentiment in each set of words, and making that the leading characteristic of the style of the composition; this sentiment in the present chorus is the extreme despondency and depression implied in the form of the lamentation, and which are represented by the gloom thrown over the whole character of the music, without relief, from beginning to end. The expression in many parts is pathetic and well suited to the words, but the composition is not equal in interest to the other two.

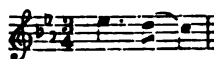
The chorus is introduced by a soprano solo (usually omitted in performance) with an obligato for

violoncello. For about thirty bars this instrument forms the sole accompaniment, but afterwards the *ns* and *tutti bassi* enter, and the violon-
is not heard alone again. At this point too
mences what is called a "ground bass"—



th, repeated over and over again, forms the foundation of the principal part of the composition,
g interrupted only by short episodes here and there. The introduction of this unthankful,
banical device in a chorus whose character is so unsuited to it, would seem to exhibit some
tience on the part of the composer at the triple work enforced on him by the unartistic libretto.

There is in this chorus a very expres-
division of the word "wretched"—



Wret - ched

th, being expressly indicated by the

acter of the music; and as it conveys nothing at variance

miably to be retained. Unfortunately,

ver, it has been "corrected" by modern

overs into the common-place form—

uage ought to be set.

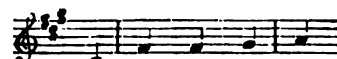


Wretch - ed

composer, is clearly intended
to augment the idea of dis-
comfort conveyed by the general
with literary propriety, it ought
under an impression that Handel,
being a foreigner, was not a com-
petent judge of how the English

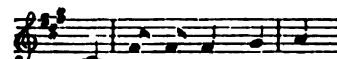
So far, however, from this impression being well founded, there is scarcely an element in his
positions more striking than the admirable way in which he has adapted, both as to quantity
sense, his music to his words. Certainly no native composer has ever excelled him in this
iclar. It is marvellous to see, when any forcible phrase occurs, how perfectly it is set; so
actly, indeed, that it is generally impossible to conceive an improvement. His ear for prosody
delicate in the extreme, and he not only perceived accurately all the requirements of measure
accent, but knew exactly how at the same time to make his rhythmical effects most appropriate
he sense, and most effective to the ear. His power in this respect was as much a gift of genius
ny of his more strictly musical qualifications.

It is singular that the instances brought against Handel's setting of English have been generally
e which, when properly understood, are the best calculated to show his peculiar skill. In addition
e one above mentioned, we may refer to two cited by Dr. Burney, who, being a scholar, ought to
e known better.* He charges Handel with having set the word "glory," in the first and last
uses in the *Messiah*, as a monosyllable, giving it only one note in the music. Handel has done
uch thing; it would be simply ridiculous to suppose he could do so, as he has set the same word
dissyllable over and over again in the same pieces. What he
done is to couple the last vowel of this word on to the first
el of the next, thus making one syllable of the two together, thus:



The glo - ry of the Lord.

th is no error, but, on the contrary, a great beauty. It is the application of the well-known rule
ersal in classical prosody, and followed also in the Italian and other modern continental
uages. It is continually used naturally in speaking English prose, and, singularly enough, though
admitted as a rule in our poetry, it is allowed by license in cases precisely analogous in sound to
where it has been applied by Handel. Let those whose ears are accustomed to the beauties
lassical and Italian poetry contrast the smooth dignity of the above setting with the halt-
clumsiness of the passage as "corrected" in modern copies—
say whether Burney and the modernisers have not something
nswer for.



The glo - ry of the Lord.

The good Doctor also objects to Handel's accentuation, in *Israel in Egypt*, of the words :

"För hē hāth trīumphed glōriously."

he forgets that down to a comparatively late period it was customary to accent the verb
umph" either on the first or last syllable, the latter mode, although now disused, being indeed

* Account of the Commemoration of Handel; pages 39, 75, 88.

the more consistent with analogy. The following examples perfectly justify Handel's accent, and many more might be found :

" Gracious triumpher in the eyes of Rome."

SHAKESPEARE, *Titus Andronicus*, Act I. Sc. 2.

" With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth."

MILTON, *Paradise Lost*, Book III.

" With victory triumphing through the air."

Ibid. Book XV.

" Triumphant over Death, and Chance, and thee, O Time."

MILTON, *Ode to Time*.

" Lo triumphing brave comes he,
Clad in boundless majesty."

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

Dr. Burney does not say how he would have preferred the passage accented, but any one will try to vary it may soon convince himself that Handel's is not only the best, but the only good setting possible ; and it is very fortunate the correctors have not been able to find out any other.

RECIT.—" BE COMFORTED."

AIR—" THE LORD WORKETH WONDERS."

This air, in which Simon again comforts the people, is one of Handel's best bravura songs, very florid, but still grand in style, and thoroughly consonant with the sentiment of the words.

RECIT.—" MY ARMS."

AIR—" SOUND AN ALARM."

CHORUS—" WE HEAR."

Judas, now emboldened by his past victories, and confiding in the strength of Omnipotence, summons his brave companions around him, and volunteers again to lead them to the fray.

The air before us is a popular one, and well calculated, like others sung by the same person, to exhibit the capabilities of a first-rate tenor singer. The following passage, though nothing can be more simple and natural, is strikingly effective when properly rendered :



This song contains a peculiar feature which, though often overlooked, presents such strong evidence of special design, that it is worth while to explain it somewhat fully. Although we are now half-way through the Oratorio, and although the part already passed has abounded in martial sentiment, it is remarkable that in the original score, none of the military instruments—trumpets or drums, have yet appeared. In the first part there is a song by Simon, "Arm, arm, brave," the sense of which is so thoroughly warlike that the composer has felt it imperative to use the military *fanfare* in the accompaniment, although he has there confined it to the violins and oboes, instead of to the more appropriate brass instruments.* The motive for the apparent anomaly only becomes intelligible when we arrive at this song.

Of the two appeals to arms—one made by the brother of Judas, and the other by the leader himself—it is obvious that the latter ought to be the more emphatic and forcible. We have seen how skilfully—in order to redeem the monotony of the three lamentation choruses—the composer could lay hold of trifling distinctions in the words, to build upon them an entire difference in style ; but in these two pieces there is no distinction in the sense to be found—they are absolutely identical ; and no option, therefore, was left to him to vary the expression.

* The enlarged resources of the modern orchestra have rendered it no longer necessary to omit the brass instruments in the earlier portions of the Oratorio.

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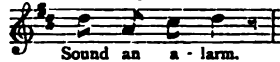
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the music, without making it untrue—a fault altogether foreign to his nature. But Handel was not a man to be baffled by a difficulty of this kind; the song was necessary, and afforded a fine opportunity for the display of the character of Judas; at the same time it was requisite to give it a superiority in some way over the air of Simon, and this object the composer has dexterously achieved by a powerful change in the instrumentation—namely, by introducing here, for the first time in the Oratorio, the brass band.

The manner, however, in which this is done is so strikingly effective as to deserve further explanation. The great majority of the songs of Handel and the writers of his day are formed on a well-known model, consisting of three parts: the first is the main body of the composition, ending with a complete close in the tonic key; then follows a short movement of a different character, frequently modulating, and ending in a different, but related key; after which there is a *Da capo* or repetition of the first part, either entire or slightly abbreviated. The present song follows this model. The first part is in D major—the heroic key *par excellence*—and comprises the first two lines of the words; it is, however, remarkable by the singular thinness of the harmony, the voice being only accompanied by the basses, “*senza stromenti*” as marked in Schœlcher’s score. The second part, “Who listeth, follow,” is similarly accompanied, and finishes in the key of A. It is then that the great point comes in, on the *Da capo* of the first part. The voice declaims, solo and *ad libitum*, the first phrase,  Sound an alarm. immediately after which the full orchestra, with trumpets and drums now added, strike up a stirring *fanfare*, which, after so long a silence of the accompaniment, comes like a clap of thunder. It is indeed an alarm which one would think eminently calculated to waken the energies of any hearer. The remainder of the song consists only of an abbreviated repetition of the first movement, but with the addition throughout of the full orchestral *fanfare* after every phrase.

The chorus of the people, responding to the call of their leader, follows immediately, without any break of time; it is accompanied by the full orchestra in the same martial strain, and the massive simplicity of the vocal parts adds fresh power to the general effect. The first chord is rendered very emphatic by the temporary introduction of a new note, C natural, into the harmony—the same device as we have already noticed at the end of the chorus, “Hear us, O Lord.”

There is also an exceedingly fine point in the seventeenth bar, where the voices, after an unfinished cadence on the words, “we follow thee to conquest,” make a dead stop of two bars length, and then take up, *piano*, the words, “if to fall,” by an unexpected resolution of the suspended chord into a minor key. The idea here is clear and most poetical. The thought of death, as the alternative of victory, presents itself for the first time to the minds of the soldiers, and for a moment damps their ardour; but only for a moment, for after one repetition of the phrase, they soon recover, with a gradual *crescendo*, the major key, and renew their joyous resolve to follow their leader to the battle. And it is worthy of remark, as a fine instance of Handel’s truth of feeling and expression, that when, shortly afterwards, they repeat this sentiment, though the form of the phrase is precisely the same as before, there is this time no pause, no *piano*, no minor key; it was only at the first thought the brave men were cast down; they can now encounter steadily the idea of death in battle, and think only of the glory of falling for their laws, their liberty, and their religion.

RECIT.—“YE WORSHIPPERS OF GOD.”

AIR—“WISE MEN, FLATTERING.”

Judas and his army having departed, his brother Simon, with others that remain behind, express their indignation at the profanation of the Sanctuary by the idolatries of their heathen oppressors, and declare their intention to restore the worship of the true God. After a bass song from Simon, omitted in the present performance, the Israelitish man and woman caution the people (though not, it must be confessed, in very intelligible terms) against the sorceries practised by the pagan worshippers, and direct them to the true wisdom that cometh from on high.

The air, "Wise men, flattering," is not in the original manuscript of the Oratorio, and is believed to have been added late in Handel's life. The germ of the melody is to be found in an air, "Se vuoi pace," near the end of the opera *Agrippina*, a very early work of Handel's, produced at Venice in 1709; but it is so much amplified as almost to bear the character of a new composition, particularly as this version is distinguished by a fulness of instrumentation quite unusual in Handel's songs. In addition to the ordinary string band, there are parts for two flutes, two oboes, two bassoons, and, in the symphonies, two horns; but it must be observed that all these do not represent distinct parts, as would generally be the case in compositions of a later school. The flutes only double the violins; the horns are merely filling to strengthen the harmony; and the oboes and bassoons have no very prominent parts assigned to them. The idea, therefore, of the composer, in adding so many instruments, appears to have been rather to give fulness than variety, and the score offers no anticipation of the beautiful school of orchestral music subsequently introduced by Mozart and Haydn.

The melody of the song is exceedingly chaste and elegant, and has a captivating freshness that renders it always a favourite.

DUET—"OH! NEVER BOW WE DOWN."

CHORUS—"WE NEVER WILL BOW DOWN."

This—the last scene of the second part—contains an exhortation against idolatry, to which the people respond in chorus, adding a solemn profession of faith in the only true God.

The duet, for two trebles (the Israelitish man and woman, who appear so often on the scene), is in C minor, and of a somewhat sombre character, relieved, however, by a melodious episode on the words, "But ever worship Israel's God."

The chorus consists of two distinct parts. The first embraces two lines of the words:

"We never, never will bow down
To the rude stock, or sculptur'd stone."

It is formed on the same theme as the duet preceding, but the treatment here, by the whole of the voices, gives it a more vigorous character. The short, separated phrases, "To the rude stock"—"or sculptur'd stone," express great decision.

The change from the first to the second part of the chorus—from the renunciation of idolatry to the confession of the true faith—has afforded Handel the opportunity for one of the grandest displays of genius to be found in the whole range of his compositions. The first part is, like the duet, in the key of C minor, and ends abruptly on the dominant chord; a short pause then ensues, after which the whole body of voices and instruments burst into a magnificent peal of harmony, in the major key, on the last line of the verse, as follows:



The effect is wonderful; it takes one's breath away. It is impossible to conceive anything more truly sublime. And yet the passage itself is simple in the extreme; it is precisely one of those things which only the power of genius could achieve, and which, therefore, it is useless to attempt to analyse or account for. There are, however, one or two features on which a passing remark may be made. In the first place, it will be observed, that in the preceding part of the chorus, though of considerable length, and in the key of C minor, the chord of C *major* is never once heard. This omission is probably intentional, as it heightens greatly the effect of the sudden transition to the major, when it does occur.*

* Sir George Macfarren has pointed out the same design in the opening of Haydn's *Creation*.

Secondly, the passage owes much of its sublimity to the noble character of the harmonic progressions of which it is composed. There are many parallel examples where a great effect is attempted by the transition from minor to major, or by a sudden burst of sound, such as the "light" of the *Creation*, the "Sound an alarm" of this Oratorio, the commencement of the finale of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, and others that will occur to the musician ; but I know of none at all comparable with this in sublimity, for the reason that here the effect does not depend alone on the tonal change, or on the mass of sound ; but rather on the continuance, chord after chord, of a majestic succession of harmonies, in the purest and grandest style. Notice the first four chords, G, C, F, B flat, with what marvellous power they tell, each one as it follows striking a new blow on the sensorium ; and indeed, through the series of twelve chords, of which the passage consists, there is not one thrown away—not one that does not seem essential to the colossal grandeur of the whole.

There is also a notable point here in regard to the words. The text of the duet and the chorus, it will be observed, differ in phraseology, though both are in the same spirit, each consisting first of a negative, and then of a positive sentiment—an abnegation of error followed by an assertion of truth. Now the two last lines of the duet, in which the true faith is announced—

" But ever worship Israel's God,
Ever obedient to His awful nod "—

are very poor, alike bad in grammar and weak in sense ; and had these been adhered to in the chorus, it is very doubtful whether Handel would have made much of them. We find, however, that though the chorus follows the first part of the duet nearly verbatim, the second part is wholly changed ; for in place of the two lines of doggerel, there is substituted one simple phrase,

" WE WORSHIP GOD, AND GOD ALONE ; "

expressing the sentiment in words, the force and majesty of which could not be exceeded by any form of diction we know. It is not improbable that Handel himself may have dictated this fine change.

It is worthy of remark that the essence of this grand passage lies in the bass ; possibly Handel may have got it from some ecclesiastical source as a Canto Fermo, or melody in the old church form ; and he has further used it as a subject on which he has constructed, contrapuntally, the whole of the remainder of the chorus. It is elaborated in the form of a fugue, with the addition of a second subject in florid counterpoint, thus :



Here the alto takes the principal, and the tenor the subordinate melody ; they are then answered by the bass and soprano ; the other voices joining in turn, in the usual way. The second subject, though exceedingly free and melodious, lends itself, without the least appearance of restraint or stiffness, to an admirable canon, for the alto and tenor, introduced episodically, to relieve the principal theme :



Shortly after this, the massive simple chords appear again ; the last four notes of the Canto Fermo, repeated by the trebles three times in succession, in descending sequence, serve as the melody, and, from the high pitch in which they are taken, tell out with great power.

The passage in canon is now repeated by soprano and bass, with imitative filling in by the other parts ; it stops short suddenly on the dominant harmony ; after which comes an emphatic isolated phrase on the words, "and God alone," followed by one of the massive conclusions for which Handel is so famous.

The whole of the movement is strictly in keeping with the religious character the composer has evidently designed to give it. The florid counterpoint of the second subject detracts nothing from its dignity, but rather seems to add to the majesty and grandeur of the principal theme, in which the sentiment of the words is more immediately expressed. It is seldom this latter is out of hearing, and when it does temporarily cease, it is only to re-enter a few bars afterwards with increased effect.

The exceeding freedom and ease, and the general melodical character of the movement, are also very illustrative of one of Handel's principal characteristics as a choral writer. His education and fine natural perception of what was great in his art, gave him a strong predilection for scholastic counterpoint, which he scarcely ever failed to employ when he wished to produce his greatest effects; and in this particular he but resembled all musicians of note either preceding or following him, except perhaps some of the ultra-modern school, who appear to consider the study of counterpoint an antiquated folly. But among the host of good contrapuntists, ancient or modern, there is not one to be found, except Mozart, who has at all approached Handel in those qualities which give scholastic music an interest to the ear—namely, melody and freedom. His journey to Italy so early in life, and his subsequent extensive practice in Italian music, engrafted the element of melody so thoroughly into his nature, that it thenceforward pervaded naturally all his productions; and it is this remarkable union of the Italian grace of form with the German strength of structure, which has contributed perhaps more than anything else to his great fame. No other composer of his age combined the two qualities. All the Italians, though melodious, were weak; all the Germans, though strong, were dry. Even the immortal Sebastian Bach himself, though Handel's equal in sublimity of harmony, and his superior in contrapuntal skill, wanted just what was necessary to make his music popular, and just what Handel so happily possessed—the charm of natural and modern melody. Handel became, so far as he needed, an Italian; Bach ever remained only a German. Bach had a certain fine flowing *sing* of his parts which has always contributed much to their interest; but Handel was the first who made counterpoint really melodical, in the modern acceptation of the term. His fugues, for example—a species of composition in which melody of any kind is rare enough—have such freedom and ease, that it is often difficult to believe that what we are hearing is rigid scholastic music. The facility with which he made fugues—the almost spontaneity with which they flowed from his pen, or developed themselves under his fingers—gave rise to an expression on the part of some of his contemporaries, that their production seemed to be one of his natural functions. And so with all other kinds of musical construction, whether simple or complex, to be met with in his choral works. He could not write counterpoint of any sort without giving it an attractive melodical elegance of form; he could not write melody without betraying, in the more solid merits of its structure, the hand of the skilled musician.

The chorus now under consideration, which forms the culminating point of the Oratorio, is not only one of the greatest instances of this double gift—the art of satisfying at once the ear and the understanding—but is, taken altogether, one of the most striking examples existing of the power of music to convey sublime ideas to the mind. It is scarcely possible to listen to it without a feeling of reverence and admiration for the genius that could evoke such stupendous effects from the domain of sound; and one cannot wonder at the fact that, whatever differences of opinion may exist as to the merits of other great writers, in regard to the fame of Handel all parties, all classes, all schools, are agreed. Though idolised by the masses, his is not mere empty popularity; for there is scarcely a musician of eminence who has not worshipped at his shrine. Mozart, the only writer who could aspire to a pinnacle as high as his own, laid respectfully at his feet the homage of genius in his accompaniments to the *Messiah*; Beethoven loved to speak of him, and to hold him up to admiration as the great master far above all; all choral writers worthy the name have studied him, and made their highest aim the imitation of his style; and they who have been fortunate enough to approach nearest this result have always gained the most enduring honour.

It is seldom that parallels can be drawn with advantage between the great men of different ages and different walks of art; but every one must acknowledge the happy force of the comparison of that eminent poet—himself the distinguished translator of the greatest of his predecessors—who describes Handel as

“The MORE THAN HOMER of his age.”


Part III.

AIR—"FATHER OF HEAVEN."

The third part of the Oratorio is entirely pacific. It contains three scenes: the first representing the solemnisation of a holy feast after the recovery and restoration of the Sanctuary; the second, the triumphant return of Judas and his army; and the third, a general thanksgiving for the permanent establishment of peace, under a treaty of amity with the Romans.

The air above named is supposed to be sung by an Israelitish man, or priest, though the voice indicated is soprano. Its subject is a prayer for a blessing on the coming ceremony, which the author strangely designates as the "Feast of Lights." There appears no warrant in the Scripture for this expression, but it may probably refer to such a feast as is mentioned in 2 Macc. x. 3:

"And having cleansed the temple, they made another altar, and striking stones, they took fire out of them, and offered a sacrifice after two years, and set forth incense, and *lights*, and shewbread."

The music is of a placid, supplicating character, and is  which is repeated at remarkable for the frequent use of a short figure in the bass—half-bar intervals over and over again in various parts of the song.

RECIT.—"O GRANT IT, HEAVEN."

AIR—"SO SHALL THE LUTE AND HARP AWAKE."

The Israelitish woman here alludes to the renewal of the musical performances of the temple, under the restored peaceful condition of things.

The song is quaint, and its numerous florid divisions make the voice eminently "sprightly."

RECIT.—"FROM CAPHARSALAMA."

CHORUS—"SEE THE CONQUERING HERO COMES."

MARCH.

An Israelitish messenger here enters, and relates how Judas, having defeated Lysias and his confederates, is approaching in triumph, bearing on his spear the head and hand of the blasphemous Nicanor. The people, on hearing these glad tidings, go out to meet the conqueror, and welcome him back to the city.

The chorus, "See the conquering hero comes," which has now taken its place as one of our most popular national melodies, does not belong properly to this Oratorio. It was written for *Joshua*, where it applies to the youthful Othniel, returning from the conquest of the city of Debir. *Joshua* was produced in March, 1748, and it appears that on the first of the following month, *Judas Maccabæus* was announced to be performed, "with additions." This date being the anniversary of the festival of 1747, it is probable that the chorus, which had excited great enthusiasm in the other Oratorio, was one of the additions referred to. It has ever since retained its place, and has never lost its attraction for the public.

An anecdote is related concerning this chorus, which, if true, would show that Handel predicted its popularity. It is said that after playing it over to a friend who happened to call upon him just as it was finished, he asked, "How do you like it?" and being answered, "Not so well as some things I have heard of yours," he replied, "Nor I either, but you will live to see it a greater favourite with the people than my other fine things." Be this as it may, there is no doubt about the popularity of the melody, the performance of which, in some shape or other, is now as indispensable in the presence of an English hero as "God save the King" is in the presence of an English sovereign.

The first strophe is directed to be sung by a "chorus of youths"; it is in three parts—two trebles and an alto, with an accompaniment of horns and organ. The second is for a "chorus of virgins," in two soprano parts, with organ and two flutes; and the last is for the full chorus, with the ordinary band. By a memorandum in one of Handel's manuscripts, it appears that he sometimes made the second strophe a duet for two principal female singers, which would certainly give greater brilliancy to the full chorus following.

It is singular that although the last line of the refrain is,

"Sound the trumpets, beat the drums;"

and although these were among Handel's usual orchestral instruments, neither trumpets nor drums once appear in his original score through the whole composition, nor yet in the march immediately following. It would seem, however, that in the latter part of the chorus, Handel sanctioned the use of the drum, as he has written against it in the MS. of *Joshua*, "Drums *ad libitum* the second time"—a direction probably referring to the side, and not the kettle drum.

The *March* was also an addition to the Oratorio after its first production. It forms part of one of Handel's organ concertos, but the date of its composition is not known. The instrumentation is singularly thin, consisting only of two violins and a bass, with two horns doubling the other parts.

In performance, it is customary to add an accompaniment for the side, or military drum, which has a peculiarly agreeable effect. This is not warranted by the score, but there is a tradition that the use of the drum was sanctioned by the composer himself, and this appears corroborated in several ways. In the first place, it is certain Handel occasionally used the instrument, as it is mentioned in the score of one of his operas, under the word "tamburi," as distinguished from kettle, or orchestral drums, which are always called "timpani." In the "Fireworks Music," brought out in 1749, they are also still more distinctly mentioned, in a minuet to which Handel has appended one of his curious polyglott directions: "la seconda volta coi corni di caccia, hautbois, bassons e tympani; la terza volta tutti insieme, and the side drums." Secondly, we find, soon after Handel's time, mention of a MS. of a "Concerto for French horns and side drums, with the march from *Judas Maccabæus*," which may lead to the inference that the side drums accompanied the march. But the most conclusive evidence is a newspaper extract, which was brought to light by the indefatigable industry of the late Mr. Husk, the librarian to the Sacred Harmonic Society,* and which shows that in September, 1748, a Mr. Fleming, of Salisbury, advertised a concert there, and announced as its principal features,

"The two celebrated French horns, from the Opera House, and likewise the famous March in *Judas Maccabæus*, accompanied by the Original Side Drum."

This proves three things of interest: first, that the march was introduced into the Oratorio early in 1748; secondly, that it was very popular; and thirdly, that it was accompanied by the side drum under the composer's direction.

CHORUS—"SING UNTO GOD."

This well-known chorus is, like many others in the work, so broad and clear in style, that any auditor with only a common perception of music will understand all about it at the first hearing. It has been already stated as probable that the popularity of the Oratorio is founded principally on the breadth of effect of many of the pieces it contains; and this chorus is a good example; for, with all its simplicity, it has still enough variety to preserve the interest throughout without flagging, and sufficient contrapuntal skill to show the master's hand.

It commences with an introductory passage for the alto part alone, repeated by the tenor, also alone, in the key of the dominant, after which all the parts burst in together.

It is now customary to let the whole body of the alto and tenor voices respectively sing in these

* *An Account of the Musical Celebrations on St. Cecilia's Day*; by W. H. Husk, 1857, p. 97.

introductory passages ; but it would rather seem to have been the intention of the composer that they should be sung by single voices only. In the original manuscript they are expressly marked "solo," a term which, in its ordinary musical acceptance, has only reference to a single voice or instrument, and never to a contrapuntal part ; and in M. Schœlcher's copy, if any corroboration of this interpretation were wanting, the names of the solo principal singers are attached who were to sing them—Signora Galli's name appearing for the alto, and Mr. Beard's for the tenor. When the whole of the parts enter, the word "tutti" is expressly written as a contradiction of the former term "solo." The accompaniment to the introductory passages is very slight, and marked *piano*, precisely corresponding to that used in Handel's songs.

When the chorus enters, the basses take up, as the foundation of the harmony, the theme previously announced by the solos, which also serves as a subject for the counterpoint in the remainder of the piece. The full staccato chords accompanying single running passages, in the twenty-sixth bar, and used more at length near the end, produce a fine effect, and have been employed by Handel in several other compositions.

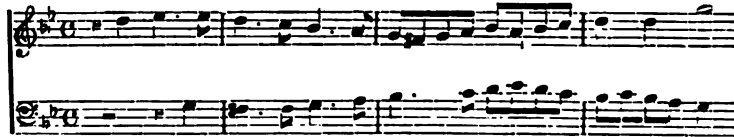
RECIT.—"PEACE TO MY COUNTRYMEN."

CHORUS—"TO OUR GREAT GOD."

The final scene celebrates the permanent establishment of peace and liberty in Judea, by the conclusion of a league of amity with imperial Rome.

One cannot but regret the introduction of this part of the libretto ; for it is rather an unworthy conclusion to such a heroic drama to represent the warrior nation—the chosen people of the Lord, with a commander in the zenith of his conquering career—as taking an ignoble refuge under the protection of a heathen power. No doubt the fact is matter of history, as it is related in the eighth chapter of Maccabees ; and it is equally true that Judas himself, as if in punishment for having instigated the alliance, was ignominiously beaten and slain in battle immediately afterwards ; but there seems no reason why this anti-climax need have been alluded to. And it is worthy of remark that Handel, who was always sensitive to the character of his subject, has allowed the music of this concluding scene to be by far the least interesting portion of the whole work.

The chorus which follows the announcement of the messenger is a fair piece of contrapuntal writing, but gives us no great idea of the warmth of the people's gratitude. The first subject is answered by inversion—



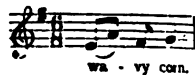
and there is a second subject slightly fugued. The following passage, however, is fine :



DUET—"O LOVELY PEACE."

The Israelitish woman, in a recitative generally omitted, invites her countrywomen to weave a chaplet for the victor's brow ; after which she and her companion, the Israelitish man, sing an

invocation to peace. It is a pastoral movement in 6-8 time, the orthodox rhythm for that kind of music, and is accompanied by two flutes, the long holding notes of which give a placid, soothing effect. The phrase— frequently repeated, is sometimes supposed to have an imitative reference to the words ; and at the end, on the word smile," is a cadence of shakes which singers delight in.



The words of this duet were originally set as an air, the melody being nearly the same. The duet form has, however, always been preferred.

AIR—"REJOICE, O JUDAH."

CHORUS—"HALLELUJAH! AMEN."

Of these pieces nothing more need be said than that they contain ideas to be found also in several other works of Handel, and serve to bring the Oratorio to a showy conclusion.

W. POLE.

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When the spirit of Duty has departed, or become deadened, or supplanted by a selfish vanity of power, or aggrandisement, etc., then the fall of England's greatness is near at hand. But not until then!

A TOAST.—Here's a sigh to those that Love our Freedom!
And a smile to those that Hate!
And to all around us here's a Nelson's heart
To meet our Fate!

Life's Race a Battle, not a Victory.

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COMPETITION 3.—To any lady who shall send in a rough sketch of the best and most novel idea for an Evening Shoe, an order on one of the best West End Firms for

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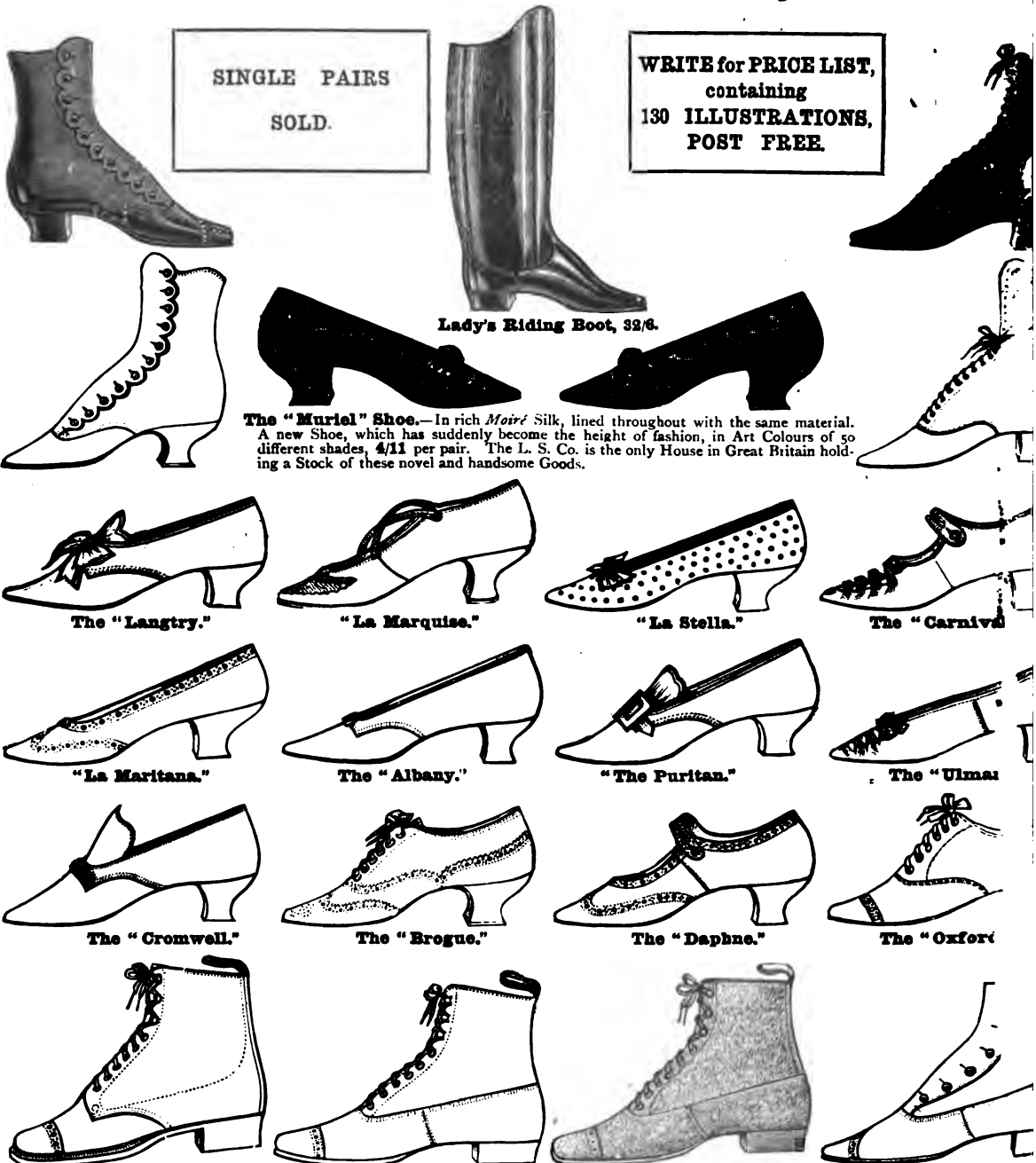
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